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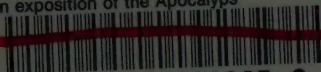
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AN
EXPOSITION
OF THE
APOCALYPSE,
IN A
SERIES OF DISCOURSES.

BY
THOMAS WICKES,

PASTOR OF THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, MARIETTA, OHIO.

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
MON I. INSCRIPTION,	9
SALUTATION TO THE CHURCHES,	12
CHRIST'S ANNUNCIATION,	14
VISION OF CHRIST,	16
II. MESSAGE TO EPHESUS,	20
" SMYRNA,	25
" PERGAMOS,	28
" THYATIRA,	32
III. " SARDIS,	37
" PHILADELPHIA,	40
" LAODICEA,	45
IV. SYMBOLICAL LANGUAGE,	49
V. VISION OF THE DEITY,	61
THE SEALED BOOK,	66
VI. THE FIRST SEAL,	72
THE SECOND SEAL,	76
THE THIRD SEAL,	80
VII. THE FOURTH SEAL,	84
THE FIFTH SEAL,	89
THE SIXTH SEAL,	93
VIII. THE SERVANTS OF GOD SEALED,	100
THE MULTITUDE IN WHITE ROBES,	103
THE SEVENTH SEAL,	105
THE FIRST TRUMPET,	108
THE SECOND TRUMPET,	111
IX. THE THIRD TRUMPET,	114
THE FOURTH TRUMPET,	116
THE FIFTH TRUMPET,	118
X. THE SIXTH TRUMPET,	129
THE RAINBOW ANGEL,	136

	PAGE
SERMON XI. THE MEASUREMENT OF THE TEMPLE, . . .	145
THE TWO WITNESSES, . . .	148
THEIR DEATH AND RESURRECTION, . . .	152
XII. THE SEVENTH TRUMPET, . . .	162
THE PROPHECIES OF DANIEL, . . .	168
XIII. THE WOMAN AND RED DRAGON, . . .	183
THE WAR OF MICHAEL AND THE DEVIL, . . .	189
XIV. THE TEN-HORNED BEAST, . . .	197
THE TWO-HORNED BEAST, . . .	205
XV. THE COMPANY ON MOUNT ZION, . . .	214
THE FIRST, SECOND, AND THIRD ANGELS, . . .	217
THE ONE ON A WHITE CLOUD, . . .	223
THE HARVEST AND VINTAGE, . . .	225
XVI. THE ANGELS WITH THE SEVEN VIALS, . . .	227
THE FIRST VIAL, . . .	232
XVII. THE SECOND VIAL, . . .	243
THE THIRD VIAL, . . .	252
THE FOURTH VIAL, . . .	255
XVIII. THE FIFTH VIAL, . . .	261
THE SIXTH VIAL, . . .	264
THE THREE UNCLEAN SPIRITS, . . .	268
THE SEVENTH VIAL, . . .	274
XIX. THE WOMAN ON THE SCARLET BEAST, . . .	279
THE BEAST AND TEN KINGS, . . .	283
XX. THE COMING DOOM OF BABYLON, . . .	291
SONG OF ALLELUIA, . . .	301
XXI. CHRIST ON THE WHITE HORSE, . . .	306
THE FINAL CONFLICT, . . .	321
XXII. THE BINDING OF SATAN, . . .	324
XXIII. THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST, . . .	343
XXIV. THE FIRST RESURRECTION, . . .	369
THE RELEASE OF SATAN, . . .	385
THE FINAL JUDGMENT, . . .	388
XXV. THE NEW HEAVENS AND EARTH, . . .	393
XXVI. THE NEW JERUSALEM, . . .	406
XXVII. FINAL COUNSELS AND WARNINGS, . . .	426

PREFACE.

THE following discourses were delivered in the regular course of pastoral instruction, without a thought, in the beginning, of their occupying a wider field. Nor was it without many doubts and misgivings that I was led, at first, to attempt the exposition of this book from the pulpit. But having become deeply interested in the study of these revelations, and finding that their meaning could be satisfactorily ascertained to a far greater extent than I had ever before conceived possible, I was induced to bring them before the people of my charge, for their instruction and benefit. Aware of the great disadvantages of presenting such a subject to a popular audience, where a week must intervene between two discourses, and no opportunity could be had, at the time, of inquiring into the speaker's meaning, or comparing it with others, I had hardly dared to hope for such a successful result of my labors, and such an interest awakened among my hearers. This and the earnest solicitation of many friends, together with the fact that there is no work which covers the same ground, have induced me to commit them to the press for a wider circulation.

In presenting the subject from the pulpit, my aim was to unfold it as one entirely new to my hearers, conducting them through the same process which my own mind had followed in the study of the book, and endeavoring thus to bring them to the same conclusions. I have sought to preserve, as far as possible, the same method in the volume of discourses, as they are now given to the public, not forestalling the meaning of a vision by conclusions afterwards arrived at, and thus making them bend to a theory, but letting each one

speak for itself. This also will explain why the discourse on symbolical language is not made introductory to the whole, but is inserted at the close of the messages to the seven churches. It seemed, at the time, most natural to introduce it there, after the hearers had listened to the explanation given of a few symbols on inspired authority, thus preparing the way for a more satisfactory view of the nature of symbolic language.

I have availed myself of all the helps within my reach in the study of this subject, and only regret that I had not access to a still greater number. I have, however, but seldom referred to the opinions of expositors. My aim has been, not to establish a point by the authority of learned names, for such can be arrayed on all sides of every passage; but to develop the nature of the symbols, so that each one may judge for himself respecting the truth of the application. This is what ordinary readers of the Bible have not supposed to be possible for them. They have had little expectation of understanding this mysterious book; and least of all, of sitting in judgment upon its meaning for themselves, as they do the other portions of scripture. They have conceived that the only course for them, was to take the opinion of some judicious commentator, and believe on *his authority*: and when they have found that equally learned and judicious men could be referred to, as sustaining the most opposite views, they have been bewildered amid conflicting opinions, and thought that it was useless for them to investigate or decide, where such men were at issue. While, therefore, I have made every available use of the opinions of others, I have done so only for the purpose of forming my own, and enabling me to unfold the nature of the symbols, that each one could see the propriety of the interpretation given for himself. It was this, more than anything else, that interested the hearers in the delivery of these discourses. A principle of interpretation was applied, which brought the symbols within the range of their comprehension and judgment

Among those from whom I have received valuable aid, I must acknowledge myself as much indebted to Mr. Lord, whose exposition first called my attention to the Revelation. I have adopted his principle of interpretation, though in a number of important cases have arrived at quite different conclusions in its application.

I would call the especial attention of the reader to *the plan* of the prophecy, unfolded in this volume. I have not noticed the same plan developed by any expositor, while it is wholly different from that assumed by most. It was unfolded gradually to my own mind, step by step, until the whole at length stood out in all its clearness, making everything consistent, harmonious, beautiful. If this likewise is the true plan, of which every one must judge for himself, (and the ordinary plan of a continuous narrative has been *taken for granted*, rather than *proved* by expositors,) then it is only in the light of it, that the prophecy can be fully understood, as this must fix the chronology, and determine the meaning of many of the visions, as well as make a perfect arrangement for the whole.

I cannot indulge the hope that all the interpretations I have given are correct; it would be presumptuous to think so. But if the true plan of the prophecy has here been developed, and this alone added to the valuable contributions which others have made to this book, I shall regard my labor as not in vain. The present knowledge which has been attained of this mysterious Revelation, is the result of the combined labors of all who have gone before us, and attempted to unfold its meaning. No one has had the honor to understand it fully in all its parts, and very few have failed to contribute something, more or less, to the exposition of its true meaning. As the end approaches, we may expect that the book will be better and better understood; for those who study it can gather up the labors of their predecessors, verifying more clearly their facts, and correcting their errors.

It is with such views and feelings that these discourses are committed to the christian public, hoping that they may advance the knowledge of the truth, and promote the love and study of the Holy Scriptures.

The chart which accompanies this volume was used on a greatly enlarged scale, in the illustration of these discourses from the pulpit, and largely assisted in simplifying the subject, by fixing the chronology, and the relative position of the events, and keeping them in memory. It answers the purpose of a *map* in the study of Geography, and as such, will assist the reader in obtaining a clearer idea of the plan of the prophecy:

MARIETTA, OHIO, *June*, 1851.

SERMON I.

Chap. 1: 1-4.—The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John, who bore record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.

Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.

THIS book is frequently styled the Apocalypse, derived from the word by which it is designated in Greek. It is the Apocalypse, or Revelation of Jesus Christ, given him by God, concerning things to come, in order that he might make them known to his church on earth. It was God's design to have the future history of the church unfolded to his servants, that they might be comforted and sustained by the everlasting promises, in the midst of all the thick darkness and fierce conflicts through which they were to pass. They would need such a revelation, and Christ left it as the inheritance of his church.

We are told, likewise, how and to whom this revelation was made—"He sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John." The ministry of an angel or messenger of God was employed to convey, and in many cases to explain, these heavenly communications to the Apostle. This angel, as it afterwards appears, was one of the redeemed Sons of Earth; for in refusing the worship which John was about to tender him, he says, "I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book." Ch. 22: 9. Some have conjectured as to which of the prophets this might be; but conjecture, where there is no revelation, is vain.

To the communications thus received from heaven, John bore a faithful record concerning all things which he saw ; implying the fact, that these revelations passed in vision before him, and he beheld them as in a picture.

These two verses then contain the principal facts which we need to know concerning this book : being a revelation from Jesus Christ, for the benefit of the church, communicated and interpreted to John by a divine messenger. It is said of the things here revealed, that they "must shortly come to pass ;" by which is meant, not that they were all to take place within a short period, but that the series of events predicted was soon to begin. We speak of a coming century or eternity, as near at hand—we mean that the events of the period spoken of are soon to commence, but the end of the series may be very far off. In this sense the events predicted in this book were "shortly to come to pass."

The next verse assures us, in strong terms, of the inestimable value of these communications, and the blessedness of those who are made acquainted with them. It was this assurance that finally decided me in respect to the propriety and profitableness of undertaking the exposition of this book to the people of my charge. I had given to it attentive study, so as to obtain some insight into its meaning, but questioned the propriety of bringing it into the pulpit. I consulted with some of the members of my charge ; but though they encouraged and advised to the undertaking, I was still in doubt. At length, my attention was directed to the passage before us. "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein." My doubts were removed. Here was the assurance from the great Head of the church himself, that the study of this book was most eminently profitable to his people, and therefore adapted to the instruction of the pulpit. If its meaning could be unfolded, I was assured of the blessedness which would flow to them that heard.

This passage also settles another point, to wit: that this revelation is not a blind, unintelligible enigma, whose meaning cannot be evolved. This is the idea more generally entertained of it; that it is full of mystery, concerning which learned men may differ and dispute; but as to being brought within the comprehension of the common mind, and any certain interpretation of its symbols established, such a thing is not to be hoped for. The wisest course, therefore, is to let it alone, as an attempt to explain it will only give another proof of its unfathomable mysteries.

Such thoughts, however, are unworthy of the subject; and plainly contradict the assurance, contained in this verse, of the blessedness of him that readeth, and them that hear the words of this prophecy. A revelation which is unintelligible is no revelation; it is like one that speaketh in an unknown tongue, and as Paul assures us in such case, to the small profit of them that hear. If God speaks to us, we are not to suppose that he addresses us in a language whose sounds can convey no intelligible meaning. The supposition is dishonorable to him. It may be, also, that this assurance was placed here at the very opening of the book, to counteract any such idea, and as God's own testimony to the value of the prophecies recorded, and the rich benefit to be derived from their study. We would not question the difficulty of interpreting this book. But we would combat the idea so extensively prevalent, that it is only a subject for learned men to puzzle over, without ever coming to anything that is satisfactory. Christ designed it for the benefit of his church, to show unto his servants things that must shortly come to pass; and "blessed is he that readeth."

Chap. 1 : 4—8. John to the seven churches which are in Asia : grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come ; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne ; and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father ; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever, Amen. Behold, he cometh with clouds ; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him ; and all kindred of the earth shall wail because of him, even , Amen. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

THE Revelation opens with the salutation of John to the seven churches of Asia, to which it was more immediately sent, and for which special messages were prepared. The salutation is one of great beauty and grandeur, in which the attributes of the triune Jehovah are set forth in the most striking manner. The name of God the Father is not mentioned ; but in the description of him, “ which is, and which was, and which is to come,” we have the eternal and unchangeable Jehovah, the *I am that I am*.

The Holy Spirit is designated as the seven Spirits which are before his throne. Some have questioned whether the third person in the Trinity was here intended, and have supposed that seven angelic spirits were described. But who seven such angels are, we have no means of ascertaining from this book, or from any other part of Scripture. Neither is it consonant with the honor which belongs to the Godhead, to suppose that created intelligences should be introduced in such a connection, and placed on an equality with the Supreme Deity. They are not moreover spoken of as seven *angels*, as doubtless they would have been, if they were such, but as seven *Spirits* ; the number seven being probably employed as a perfect and sacred number, to designate his infinite dignity and excellence.

Jesus Christ is next spoken of by name, and more fully described, because the author of the revelation, and the supreme head of the church. He is the faithful witness, the first be-

gotten of the dead, the Prince or Ruler of the kings of the earth, or, as described in another place, the King of kings, and the Lord of lords, as he who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, our glorious Redeemer, to whom belongs all honor and dominion for ever. This is He, who shall come again, not in his humiliation and suffering, but in power and glory; yea, in the clouds of heaven, when every eye shall behold him: causing the kindreds of the earth to wail, but his church to rejoice; for his saints can say, even so, Amen. He is also the Alpha and Omega, which being the first and last letters of the Greek Alphabet, convey the same idea with the following expression, of the first and the last, or the beginning and the ending. While the whole is concluded in the very terms which John employed to describe the eternal Father: He, "which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty."

Nothing beyond this certainly could be ascribed to Jesus Christ. He is clothed with every attribute with which we can invest the Deity. If God can be more than our Saviour is here represented to be, it is something which our thoughts cannot reach. The manner, too, in which the sacred writers everywhere speak of Christ, and the exaltation which they give him, is to be taken in connection with the fact of the universal proneness of men to idolatry, as well also with the extreme caution that the Bible takes to guard them against this sin. God has known how prone the race has been to take the honor from him, and give it to them that are no gods. Yet directly in face of this great crying sin of the race, the sacred writers have everywhere spoken of Jesus Christ in such language, and conferred upon him such attributes, as would inevitably lead men to worship him. When also the redeemed sons of earth fall down at the feet of their glorious Deliverer, "who loved them and washed them from their sins in his own blood," to worship and adore, where is the warning caution given,

such as John received from the angel at whose feet he fell, "See thou do it not—worship God?" If Jesus Christ is not God, to be worshiped, loved, served, and adored as such, then I cannot but look upon the Bible, in one respect, as a stupendous failure: being a development of a grand series of efforts on the part of God through four thousand years to rescue men from one kind of idolatry, only to plunge them irrecoverably, and with the sanction of divine authority itself, into another kind. For that the direct tendency of the Bible is to lead men to worship Jesus Christ, is a fact too plain to be controverted. With this revelation, too, in our hands, we certainly are innocent, if, in the fulness of our overflowing hearts, we render divine honors to our ever adorable Redeemer, who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, the Alpha and Omega; which is, and which was, and which is to come; the Almighty.

Chap. 1: 9-11. I, John, who also am your brother and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last; and what thou seest write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

JOHN informs us of the fact, that he was, at the time that this revelation was made to him, a prisoner in the Isle of Patmos, to which he had been banished by the Emperor, for the crime of being an humble follower of Jesus. Patmos was a small, rocky, and extremely desolate island in the *Ægean Sea*, a short distance from the coast of Asia Minor, being six or eight miles in length, and but a little more than one mile in breadth. On account of its extreme dreariness, it was selected

by the Emperors as the place of banishment for state criminals from the Roman provinces of Asia. Christianity was a crime in those days, for which John was sent into banishment by the Emperor Domitian, in the latter part of his reign. The death of Domitian occurred A. D. 96, immediately after which John was released and returned to Ephesus. We may conclude, therefore, that it was in the above named year, or the one preceding, that the Apocalypse was written. Christianity has thus made that desert, rocky isle for ever memorable in the history of the world, changing its name of deepest infamy to one of sacred interest, embalmed with holiest recollections.

The manner in which John speaks of himself, in addressing the seven churches, is very affectionate. He was "their brother and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ." He was a sharer in the church's present period of trial, enduring and looking forward with patience to the end; the brother and companion of all who were alike faithful, yet a companion not only in tribulation, but also in the kingdom of Jesus Christ; for they who suffer shall likewise reign.

It was on the Sabbath, or the Lord's day, that this revelation was made to John, and when he "was in the spirit," in prophetic vision, or under the influence of the spirit of prophecy. In this state he heard behind him a great voice, loud as the startling notes of a trumpet, announcing the presence of Jesus, and commanding him to write what he saw, and send it to the seven churches named. The fact is an important one to be understood and kept in mind, that the things written in this book are what John *saw*. It was a vast moving panorama passing before his sight, the grandest panorama that human eyes ever beheld, or thought of mortals ever reached—a panorama of the church's future history until the final consummation. A description of these stupendous scenes John was directed to write in a book, and send to

the seven churches of Asia, of which we will speak hereafter more particularly.

Chap. 1 : 12—20.—And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks. And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow ; and his eyes were as a flame of fire ; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace ; and his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars ; and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword : and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not ; I am the first and the last ; I am he that liveth and was dead ; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen ; and have the keys of hell and of death. Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter ; the mystery of the seven stars, which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches ; and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.

HERE is the commencement of the symbolic or hieroglyphic characters, in which the visions were communicated to John. Turning in the direction whence the voice proceeded, he beheld seven superb candlesticks, in the midst of which one was standing, having the appearance of humanity, but of inexpressible brightness and glory. The vision was so overpowering in its majesty and splendor, that John fell down before it as one dead—he lay prostrate and senseless. And no wonder—for John saw at once that he stood in the immediate presence of the Deity. He had heard the announcement already, by the voice behind him, “I am the Alpha and Omega ;” but he was unprepared to have such a vision meet his eyes. A human form was there, but arrayed in such vestments as proclaimed the God. His eyes of flame—his voice like the majestic sound of many waters—his feet like burnished brass glowing in the furnace—a two-edged sword proceeding from his mouth, and his face as the unclouded dazzling sun. There are visions of earth which we sometimes behold, that appal the stoutest heart, and deprive the beholder of all power of speech or motion.

Well, then, might John have fallen as one dead before such a vision as now stood revealed. This, too, is the effect which it would have on every mind. Men may talk atheism; but it is the atheism of the lips and the heart alone, and a coward heart too; an atheism that would flee appalled before the burning footsteps of the Deity. Let such a vision stand revealed to any mortal, as here appeared to John, and the instantaneous irresistible conviction would be,—'tis God—'tis God—'tis none but He.

We, too, my hearers, shall behold that glorious vision; for "every eye shall see him, and they also that pierced him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him." We shall see him when he cometh in his glory, and in the glory of his Father and of the holy angels. How, too, shall we stand before those eyes of flame, and the consuming brightness of that face, unless transformed into his likeness, and arrayed in his robe of perfect righteousness?

John, however, was not left to decide from the nature of the vision alone who this glorious one was; for coming and laying his right hand upon his prostrate and apparently lifeless servant, he said: "Fear not; I am the first and the last; I am he that liveth," or the living one, which was one of the peculiar titles by which the Jews designated Jehovah, and distinguished him from all false gods. He was the living God. "I am he that liveth and was dead." How strange and wonderful the apparent contradiction, asserted too of the ever living Deity! "I am the living one, was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." Though from eternity I was, I entered death's dark domains, and suffered the tyrant there to bind me with his chains. But at my pleasure, I burst the chains, opened the prison doors, took possession of the keys, rose, a triumphant conqueror, ascended on high, and now live evermore, with sovereign power over death and hell. At my voice death shall open all his gates to let his prisoners

forth ; nor the grave shall hold its victims when I please to deliver.

Thus describing himself to John, and dissipating his fears, he delivers his important message. And well might this servant of the Lord suppose that he had no ordinary work to perform, when his commission was received from such lips, and in the midst of a vision of such transcendent glory. The message was, to write the things which should be revealed to him. He was to be the inspired penman, through whom a glorious revelation was to be made to the church. "Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter." One clause in this passage will bear a different rendering, which will add to the force and clearness of the whole. Write the things which thou hast seen, and *what they are*, that is, what they signify, and the things which shall be hereafter. The mystery of the seven stars—and the seven golden candlesticks. In accordance with this it is stated what the things seen do signify. "The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches; and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.

The fact may be noticed and borne in mind, that the symbols employed in this vision are explained by Christ himself. I do not design now to speak particularly of the nature of symbolic language, reserving a more full explanation to a subsequent discourse. But a remark in passing may be important. The question may have arisen in some minds, is not the interpretation of the symbols of this book all uncertain and arbitrary? Have we any certain clue to their meaning, or is it all guess work? I reply, that we have a very important clue in the fact that a few of them are interpreted on Divine authority, as if thus a specimen would be given of the general manner in which they are all to be explained. John saw in vision a glorious one of human form, standing in the midst of seven golden candlesticks, holding in his right hand seven stars. This

SERMON II.

Chap. 2: 1—7.—Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil; and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars; and hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast labored and hast not fainted. Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember, therefore, from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. To him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

At the time this revelation was given, Ephesus was the chief capital of proconsular Asia, its pride and glory, being a city of vast extent and opulence, and built with great splendor. It was situated at the head of a large bay, putting up from the *Ægean* Sea, into which also flowed a river of some size. This city was likewise the great central point of idolatry in Asia Minor, containing, as it did, that wonder of the world, the magnificent temple of Diana, which was four hundred and twenty-five feet in length, two hundred in breadth, seventy feet high, with one hundred and twenty-seven pillars of Parian marble, each a single shaft sixty feet in height.

A church was early planted in this chief mart of idolatry by the labors of the Apostle Paul, which became very large and flourishing. One fact, stated in the book of Acts, is evidence of the wonderful success of the Gospel in this city. Such multitudes were converted, that "Many of them also which used curious arts, [arts of divination and magic,]

brought their books together, and burned them before all men; and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver, so mightily grew the Word of God and prevailed." Acts, 19: 19, 20. The sum mentioned here would be equal to ten thousand dollars. And some estimate it at six times that amount. But ten thousand dollars worth of books on incantation and magic destroyed, especially considering the far greater scarcity of books at that day as compared with the present, is striking evidence of the extent to which the Gospel had made progress among the citizens of Ephesus. Such inroads, also, were made upon their system of idolatry as seriously to affect the trade of the silversmiths, a large portion of whose business consisted in the manufacture of silver shrines of Diana, which were little models of her temple and image, bought by strangers and others resorting thither. This was taken occasion of by Demetrius, one of the craft, for raising a riot, which filled the whole city with confusion, and excited the passions of the infuriated mob to the highest point.

The messages to the different churches all open with some appropriate description of Christ, drawn either from the glorious vision of him, which John had just beheld, or from some of the peculiar titles which he had claimed to himself. The description in each case has likewise some peculiar significance, as connected with the threatening uttered, or the reward promised to the given church.

In the message to Ephesus, Christ is described as "he who holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, and walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks." The threatening against this church was, "I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place." It was his prerogative to do this, who held the stars in his right hand, and walked in the midst of the candlesticks.

Christ had much to commend in this church of Ephesus. Its past history had been deeply interesting. It had been a

devoted, praying church, faithful in the midst of many labors—patient in trials—adhering steadfastly to the truth—rejecting the pretended claims of false prophets and teachers, and persevering long in duty without fainting. “I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil; and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles and are not, but hast found them liars, and hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name’s sake hast labored, and hast not fainted.” This was high commendation indeed. It was also, be it remembered, the commendation of him who holdeth the stars in his right hand. He says, I know thy works and thy labor and thy patience. It was therefore no human estimate of their piety and zeal. It was the approving testimony of Christ himself.

But this was not their present happy and prosperous condition. Says Christ, I have now “somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.” The other things specified were for thee, but this is against thee. It was indeed against them, that they had left their first love. Why had they left it? Was that love for Christ in the beginning too fervent, that they now suffered it to abate? Had their zeal been so great, their labors and sacrifices so abundant, that they had reason now to reproach themselves? Christ did not appear so to regard it. He commended most highly that love which had for so long a time inspired their hearts, which led to such faithful, persevering efforts in his service, and brought forth so much fruit to his glory. But they had sadly fallen from that state; and Christ now looked upon them with grief and displeasure. His significant language was, “I have somewhat against thee.” He called upon them to remember their former condition, to repent and do their first works. To show also in what a serious light he regarded their defection, he gave them the solemn warning in case of their not giving heed to his words, “I will come

unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."

It is a fearful thing, my brethren, for a church thus to fall from its affection and faithfulness to Christ—to lose their zeal in his sacred cause, and be found no more efficient in labors and sacrifices, if need be, to promote his kingdom. When such declension takes place among a people, their only safety is in repentance, and a return to their first works. Except they thus repent, their condition becomes more and more sad; and the warning held up to Ephesus may be taken as an intimation of what they also may expect, the removal of their candlestick out of his place. It is a warning, too, which might be enforced by numerous examples.

Christ, however, has still a word of approval to the Ephesian church, notwithstanding their declension; showing that he does not overlook anything that is to be commended, nor reprove where reproof is not needed. "This thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate." This sect is supposed to have derived its name from Nicholas, a proselyte of Antioch, who was chosen one of the seven deacons by the church at Jerusalem. Acts 6: 5. A Gentile by birth, he became a proselyte to the Jewish faith, and was afterwards converted to the gospel of Christ. It is not by any means certain that this man taught the doctrines which were embraced by the sect called after his name; many thinking that he was rather the occasion than the author of them. The infamous practices attributed to this party were the lawfulness of promiscuous intercourse with women, and of eating things sacrificed to idols. We are not to wonder that the former even of these should creep into the Christian church, when we remember the extreme corruption of morals and the tone of public sentiment which prevailed at that day among the heathen, where these churches were gathered. The case alluded to by the apostle, 1 Cor. 5, shows how difficult it was to keep the infec-

tion out of the company of believers. In respect to the other practice named, the temptation was strong to indulge in it. Idolatry was popular; many, perhaps, professing Christianity, might escape persecution by indulging so far as to partake in the feasts eaten in honor of the idols, maintaining that the meat was not affected, one way or the other, by being thus devoted; and that Christian liberty was to be exercised in such matters. It is evident from these messages to the seven churches, in which this same subject is several times alluded to, that this sect of the Nicolaitanes had become widely prevalent, and was spreading corruption to an alarming extent through the Christian body. It is evident, also, that it was not merely opinions held by this party that were so obnoxious, but practices. Their conduct was immoral. It is "the *deeds* of the Nicolaitanes" of which Christ speaks with so much disapprobation.

Notwithstanding, then, the abatement of the piety of the Ephesian church, they are commended by Christ on this point,—that they abhorred the doctrines and practices inculcated by this sect. They had maintained their Christian integrity at this point, which was noticed to their honor. The fact, likewise, that the preservation of their purity in this matter is particularly noted, shows the wide prevalence of this corrupt sect, and the danger to which the churches were exposed thereby.

The epistle to Ephesus closes with an admonition and a promise; an admonition to give heed to the solemn message delivered them. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." The promise was to all who should endure and prove faithful to the end. Their reward should be great. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." He should be admitted to a more glorious paradise than that from which our first parents were driven; and there he should be permitted free access to the tree of

life in the midst of the garden. In this promise Christ shows them, also, that he did not condemn or approve indiscriminately. Even if the mass of the church should continue in their declension, yet they who maintained their Christian fidelity should not lose their reward. To each one that overcame, an entrance should be given to the paradise of God.

What, we may now inquire, has been the fate of this once flourishing Ephesian church? We have no reason to suppose that it heeded the warning given, or was restored to its first love. For the candlestick has been removed from his place. No vestige of a church now remains in that once proud city. Nay, the city itself is no more. That wealthiest, most extensive metropolis of Asia Minor, where tens of thousands once congregated, and shouted "great is Diana of the Ephesians," has passed utterly away, some ruins alone remaining, inhabited by the stork and the jackal, with a few miserable Turkish huts. Others now read the message to the church of Ephesus, but there are none there to hear or regard.

Chap. 2: 8—11. And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead and is alive: I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich); and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer. Behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh, shall not be hurt of the second death.

SMYRNA is situated on a bay of the *Ægean* Sea, forty miles directly north from Ephesus, its fine harbor rendering it, from time immemorial, one of the most important commercial places in hither Asia.

The appellation which Christ assumes in this message is that of "the first and the last, which was dead and is alive

again. I am the risen and everlasting Redeemer, the conqueror of death—able therefore to bring thee out of all thy tribulations, and place upon thy brow the crown of life, which I promise.

Against this church Christ has nothing to bring. He gives no reproof, utters no warning. It is all commendation, encouragement, and the promise of glorious reward. The facts recognized show that there was a band of faithful believers at Smyrna, who, for the testimony of Jesus, had been called to severe trials and persecutions, among which their poverty is particularly noticed. It is not improbable that this very poverty arose from their profession of Christianity, having taken joyfully the spoiling of their goods for Christ's sake. This is a form of persecution which the followers of Jesus are often called to meet in the midst of prevailing idolatry. They are disinherited by parents, cast out of public employment. The community are forbidden to trade with them, or render them assistance in any form. Their means of subsistence is cut off, and they harassed in every possible manner. It is possible that the church of Smyrna passed through this severe trial of poverty. But says Christ, "Thou art rich," notwithstanding. Thine enemies think that they have reduced thee to penury and wretchedness. But thou art not poor; and the wondering world shall ere long behold, and confess to the infinite treasures which thou hast securely laid up for thee.

Allusion is made to the virulent blaspheming opposition of wicked Jews. The New Testament history shows, that the Jews were the prime instigators of nearly all the opposition that was raised against the early Christians. They were the most bitter in their hatred, most unrelenting in their persecutions, urging on the Gentiles to the cruel work. History informs us that when the noble Polycarp suffered martyrdom, who was pastor of this very church at Smyrna, and possibly, too, at the time John was writing his message to it, the Jews

its site. Its name belongs to the history of the past. But who has not heard of Smyrna, identified, as it has been, with modern missions? Smyrna still stands one of the largest and most wealthy cities of Asia Minor, embracing a population of one hundred thousand or more; from fifteen to twenty thousand of whom belong to the Greek Church, and eight or ten thousand to the Armenian. The light there has become dimmed; but the time may be near at hand, when God will remember the faith and tribulation of his ancient servants, and trim again the lamps which once burned so brightly.

Chap. 2: 12—17. And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges: I know thy works and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is; and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth. But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate. Repent, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it.

PERGAMOS was sixty-four miles north from Smyrna; Ephesus, Smyrna, and Pergamos being in a line directly north and south, the two first on bays of the Ægean Sea, the last some miles back from the coast. Pergamos was the ancient metropolis of the province of Mysia, and the residence of the Attalian kings. It was a city of much importance, and some of the ruins of its former magnificence still remain.

The description of Christ in this message is in accordance with the character of the church addressed, and the work which he was to perform in it. It was He "that hath the sharp sword with two edges." For there were those against whom he threatened to fight with the sword of his mouth.

The epistle opens with a commendation of their Christian fidelity—their steadfast adherence to the faith, even in a time of severe persecution, when Antipas, who was probably the pastor of this church, was called to martyrdom. Christ also notices the fact of their peculiar situation, in being exposed to more than usual temptation from the circumstance of their dwelling “where Satan’s seat” was. Pergamos was a city reputed to be “sacred to the gods,” and was the headquarters of idolatry, where Satan had his stronghold. We find such cities now among the Hindoos and other heathen nations, which are regarded with peculiar veneration and sanctity, and where are their most honored temples. Such was Pergamos. The influences, therefore, against Christianity were very powerful; and it was greatly to the honor of this church, that so many of them adhered steadfastly to the faith.

Christ, however, had a few things against them. Some among them tampered with idolatry, and the licentiousness with which it was always more or less connected—called here the doctrine of Balaam, because it was by this very thing that that wicked prophet taught Balak, the king of Moab, to tempt the people of Israel to their destruction. The history of this affair is found in Num. 25: 1—3. “And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab. And they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods; and the people did eat, [eat things sacrificed to idols, or joined in their idolatrous feasts,] and bowed down to their gods. And Israel joined himself unto Baal-peor, and the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel.” We are also informed, Num. 31: 16, that this was brought about through the counsel of Balaam, who would not openly pronounce the curse upon Israel, as desired, but craftily advised Balak afterward to wage war upon the Lord’s people, by drawing them into idolatry, which he knew would be the most certain means of their destruction.

The church of Pergamos was involved in the same sin, joining in the idolatrous feasts of the heathen, and committing fornication, which was part of the sanctioned orgies of their religion. In many heathen countries vile women are attached to the temples of the gods, and at the stated feasts, licentiousness becomes a part of the religious celebration. The doctrine of the Nicolaitanes is also spoken of, as having found its way into this church. It is uncertain, however, whether we are to understand the doctrine of Balaam and of the Nicolaitanes as the same, or two different heresies. More probably the same; and the idea is, as the Hebrews had Balaamites among them, so likewise have you the Nicolaitanes, teaching the same corrupt doctrines. This may find confirmation in the rather singular fact, that the Hebrew meaning of Balaam and the Greek of Nicolaus is the same precisely, which is, subduer of the people. The doctrine of Balaam would thus stand as a symbol of that taught by the Nicolaitanes.

The solemn and imperative message sent to all who were implicated in this thing, was to "repent," with the certain alternative, "I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth." The Redeemer of Israel would contend with them in judgment until he had consumed them. This was what the Spirit said to the church. He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear.

There was a blessed promise, however, to all that overcame, and maintained their steadfastness in the faith. They shall eat of the hidden manna, and receive a white stone, with a new name written thereon, known only to him who receives it. As manna was the food miraculously provided for the Israelites, it is here employed as the symbol of the spiritual provisions upon which they shall feed who are admitted to the paradise above. They shall be supplied with heavenly manna. It is *hidden*, because laid up in reserve, and kept as in the ark of God's covenant.

In respect to the meaning of the white stone and the new name, there have been various opinions, nor is it easy to determine with certainty which is the correct one. The difficulty arises in ascertaining to what ancient custom allusion is made. Some refer it to the use of white and black balls or stones at elections or trials; the former to denote acquittal or approbation; the latter, condemnation or rejection. I think, however, with many of the commentators, that the most satisfactory reference is to the *tesseræ hospitalitatis*, which were used in ancient times as pledges of the rites of hospitality. These were held to be very sacred, a person once eating at your table being regarded as thenceforth entitled to friendship and favor. As evidence, too, that the rites of hospitality had been extended and received, it was customary, frequently, to give a token or pledge, which consisted of a stone, or piece of metal, divided in two, so that the parts exactly fitted each other. Upon one of these the name of the host was engraved, and upon the other the name of the guest; and these, exchanged between the parties, were preserved with sacred care, and transmitted through several generations. They were held as heir-looms in the family, and, as Professor Lee observes, were "a sort of *carte blanche*, entitling the person who showed it, to ask for and receive what he might want." Allusion is doubtless had to these sacred rites of hospitality where Christ says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Rev. 3: 20. We will eat at the same board, and thus exchange the pledges of eternal friendship and favor. Jesus Christ will then give, to every one that overcometh, a white stone with a new name in it—yea, his own precious, eternal name. With that stone, the honored possessor will find no difficulty in obtaining free access to the rich and everlasting hospitalities of heaven itself. He shall be called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

What has been the history of Pergamos? Christ did not threaten that he would remove their candlestick out of his place, as he did the Ephesian church; though he warned those Balaamites that he would come, and fight against them with the sword of his mouth. Pergamos, therefore, still remains with a population of fifteen thousand; of whom fifteen hundred are Greeks, and two hundred Armenians, each of them having a church.

Chap. 2: 18-29. And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass: I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first: notwithstanding, I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication, and she repented not. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts; and I will give unto every one of you according to your works. But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, As many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden; but that which ye have already, hold fast till I come. And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: (and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers;) even as I received of my Father. And I will give him the morning star. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

THYATIRA was a city of some importance, though not of any great distinction, lying forty-eight miles to the south-east of Pergamos, forming a triangle with Pergamos and Smyrna, and about equidistant from both.

The appellation given to Christ in this message is that of "the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass"—the great searcher of all hearts, who can thus render to every man according to his works. As such, too, shall he be known in all the churches, when he shall deal with that woman Jezebel and her

children according to his designs. Whether there is any particular significancy to the representation of having his feet like fine brass, I am not able to say.

The epistle opens with a strong commendation of the piety of this church, its faith and labors, "and the last more than the first," by which is meant, that their works had been more abundant in the end than the beginning. They had been growing in piety, and increasing in every good work. Nevertheless, Christ had something against them, which was, that they suffered a certain woman, who claimed to be a teacher or prophetess, to seduce his people from the right way, in committing fornication, and eating things sacrificed to idols—the same sins into which some of the church in Pergamos were drawn. It has been thought that the woman referred to was the wife of the pastor of this church; but this is only conjecture. She no doubt held a commanding position, and exerted a powerful influence. She is styled Jezebel, not that that was her proper name, but because she was a Jezebel in character, like the wicked wife of Ahab. In all probability, she was a captivating, artful, insinuating woman, claiming to be a divine teacher; and by her talent and position wielding no little power. She was likewise sustained by a considerable party in the church, who adopted her views, and conformed to the vile practices she inculcated. This party may have been so strong, that they could not be dealt with in the way of discipline by the rest of the church.

Some have understood the term Jezebel, not as designating a particular woman, but a class or number of them, teaching these doctrines. Either meaning may be adopted—but from the manner in which "her children" or disciples are spoken of, it would seem rather to point out a particular woman, who was prominent in the matter, and the chief instrument of mischief.

Under the labors of this Jezebel, a strong idolatrous party was built up in the church, who made a boast of their wis-

dom, or mysteries, or spiritual discernment, "as they speak," or as they termed it, but which Christ more truly calls "the depths of Satan." It was rendered a specious, captivating doctrine, presented with strong attraction to minds not well established in the faith, and fortified by firm religious principle; for we are not to suppose that these licentious, idolatrous doctrines, as presented then, would appear as they would now to us in the altered circumstances of society. The connection of Christians with idolatry, in eating flesh which had been offered in sacrifice to idols, was a great question of conscience in those days, on which there was diversity of opinion; while the exhortation repeatedly given by the apostle to flee fornication, shows that the tone of moral sentiment and the prevailing influence of idolatry were such as to make the lapse into this sin very easy, and that to guard against it demanded strong religious principle.

It appears, also, from the epistle, that this woman had been exerting her pernicious influence for a considerable period of time in the church, as space had been given her to repent of her fornication, without avail. God had exercised his long suffering forbearance toward her; but as she still persevered in her wicked course, he would now appear for judgment against her, and those who were partakers in her sin. By casting her "into a bed," is meant that God would bring her down helpless upon a bed of sickness and pain, making her, doubtless, a most distressing object; while those that committed adultery with her were to be cast into "great tribulation." Her children, also, or disciples, were to be killed "with death," or deadly pestilence. Thus God would visit this whole corrupt party with sore plagues and destruction, so that all the churches should know that it was He that searcheth the hearts and trieth the reins. It may not be improbable that God would cause them to receive in their own bodies the terrible fruits of their licentious prac-

The Lord will take care of such ; if need be, he will fight against them with the sword of his mouth. We are not to suffer sin in the church where we have power to remove it ; but beyond that, we have no responsibility. God will reward every man according to his works. That is the doctrine of Christianity ; and it is a blessed truth, that Jesus Christ knows all his faithful ones ; that he can select the wheat from the tares, and does not condemn the crop because the tares are found in it.

plorable character this for Christ to give to a church—bearing only the name of a christian body. This, too, was what Christ himself knew of them.

There may be some difficulty in our obtaining a perfectly correct idea of the character of this church in Sardis; but from the few facts stated, as well as from some things omitted, we may perhaps come to a somewhat accurate estimate. They are not then charged with any heresy, or indulgence in any such vile practices as prevailed at Pergamos and Thyatira. The doctrines of the Nicolaitanes are not laid to their account. Nor, on the other hand, is there mention of their former piety and zeal in the service of God. It was perhaps no object on the part of Satan to make an effort to corrupt such a church, by any particular erroneous doctrine or practice.

Connected now with these negative facts, there are also two positive statements made. One was, that they were dead, having only a name to live; the other, that Christ had not found their works perfect, which perhaps amounted to nearly the same thing. There was something essentially defective in their whole character, and in all their labors. The power of vital godliness was wanting. The outward form of religion existed, but there was no spirituality, no faith. The church had doubtless felt the corrupting influences of that voluptuous city, and been destroyed by them. There were the external vestments of Christianity, but they covered only a worldly spirit.

The exhortation given to this church was one adapted to their state—a call to sincere repentance, to earnest vigilance and effort to prevent the catastrophe of their utter extinction. They were warned to awake from their supineness, to take the alarm, and strengthen what little of good still remained—to repent and seek help from him who hath the seven Spirits of God. This admonition was accompanied with a solemn warning, as to what they might expect if they gave

Chap. 3: 7—13. And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast not denied my name. Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh, will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

PHILADELPHIA, situated twenty-seven miles to the east and south of Sardis, was once a large and powerful city, thus continuing to later times; so that for a period of eighty years, it held out against the Ottomans, after they had overrun and subdued the whole surrounding region, and finally capitulated A. D. 1390 with one of the proudest monarchs of that power. Not long previous to the writing of this epistle, Philadelphia had suffered very severely from repeated earthquakes, which had caused it to be almost deserted of its inhabitants. This perhaps may have been one cause of the poverty of the church, to which allusion is made in the message. Subsequently, however, the city recovered from these disasters, and attained a high degree of prosperity.

The character in which Christ portrays himself here, is as "He that is holy and true," therefore approving of, and rewarding their fidelity; as "He that hath the key of David," and therefore setting before them an open door which none could shut.

The character of this message is widely different from the preceding. In that, there was nothing to commend, but only words of solemn warning, admonition, and threatening. In this, there is no rebuke whatever, but only the language

but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee."

Reference in this is made again to the malignant, persecuting spirit of the Jews, denominated "the synagogue of Satan." They had probably manifested their deadly hatred to the church at Philadelphia, as they had at Smyrna, and as they did everywhere. Christ promises that he would so order it, that these proud and bitter enemies of theirs should be humbled at their very feet, conceding that they enjoyed the protection and favor of heaven. We are not informed as to the particulars of this history; but the Christian cause was to be so exalted, and the Jews so brought down and humbled, that they would be constrained to acknowledge God's especial favor toward his own people. It may be, that these very persecuting Jews, who, in their pride and power, had sought to crush the church, were afterwards, in their reverses, glad to seek its protection from their enemies, and find shelter under its favoring wing.

The third promise was, that having kept the word of Christ, they should be kept from the trying hour of temptation, which was coming on all the world. Some suppose that the hour of temptation spoken of, refers to a severe and general persecution against the Christian church throughout the Roman empire, but from which they of Philadelphia should be mercifully preserved. This may have been the fact. Whether it was so or not, we have no means of information. But I think, with other commentators, that this promise has a more perfect fulfillment in their preservation from that hour of greater temptation, when Mohammedanism, like a desolating scourge, swept over that portion of the world, and tried them that dwell on the earth. When we come to the particular discussion of the prophecies of the Apocalypse, we shall see what an hour of sore trial to the Eastern churches it was, when the bottomless pit was opened, (chap. 9;) and thence issued a smoke, and out of the smoke locusts, which

overspread the earth. Under these symbols the delusion of the Mahomet is set forth. It is also a fact, that the church of Philadelphia was preserved, as no other church of Asia was, in the midst of this abounding heresy.

With these cheering promises, the churches is exhorted to hold fast to their integrity, so that no man take their crown, or that they be disappointed of their expected reward. At the same time, they are pointed forward to the reward which awaits them hereafter, and the promise is that they shall be made pillars in the temple of God, upon which shall be inscribed the names of God, and of the new Jerusalem, the city of God, and Christ's new name. To be made a pillar in a temple is to occupy a conspicuous position in the most sacred honored place. To write upon them the name of God and Immanuel is to mark them as the people of the Most High; while the inscribed name of the new Jerusalem designates them as destined for citizenship in that glorious city of God, whence they shall go out no more forever.

Inquiring now into the history of this church, we find the words of prophecy to have been most remarkably fulfilled. Philadelphia still stands, adorned in beauty, being embosomed in trees. For more than eighty years, as already stated, it held out against the Ottoman power, and was among the last cities of Asia Minor, that yielded to the Turkish sword. The influence of Christianity, too, is felt there, as perhaps in no other city of that region, overrun by the Mohammedan faith. There are twenty-five places of public worship, in five of which regular service is held every Sabbath. In the other twenty the Greek liturgy is read once every year. The city contains a resident bishop, and several inferior clergy. In Keith's Evidence of Prophecy are the following statements respecting the then presiding bishops. He acknowledges "the Bible as the only foundation of all religious belief," and admits that "abuses have entered into the church, which former ages might endure, but the present

must put down." It is likewise a coincidence of not a little singular character, that the modern Turkish name of Philadelphia is Allah-Shehr, which means City of God—the very name which Christ promised to write upon the faithful members of his church.

The following is the language of the historian Gibbon, and is the remarkable testimony of an infidel to the truth of prophecy. "The captivity or ruin of the seven churches of Asia was consummated [by the Ottomans] A. D. 1312, and the barbarous lords of Ionia and Lydia still trample on the monuments of classic and Christian antiquity. In the loss of Ephesus the Christians deplore the fall of the first angel, the extinction of the first candlestick of the revelation. The desolation is complete; and the temple of Diana and the church of Mary will equally elude the search of the curious traveler. The circus and three stately theatres of Laodicea are now peopled with wolves and foxes. Sardis is reduced to a miserable village. The god of Mohammed without a rival is invoked in the mosques of Thyatira and Pergamos; and the populousness of Smyrna is supported by the foreign trade of the Franks and Armenians. Philadelphia alone has been saved by prophecy or courage. [This is an infidel sneer.] At a distance from the sea, forgotten by the emperors, encompassed on all sides by the Turks, her valiant sons defended their religion and freedom above fourscore years, and at length capitulated with the proudest of the Ottomans. Among the Greek colonies and churches of Asia, Philadelphia is still erect—a column in a scene of ruins—a pleasing example that the paths of honor and safety may sometimes be the same." Such is the testimony of this accomplished historian, though no friend to Christianity.

"I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot; I would thou wert cold or hot." These terms are doubtless employed to designate a state decidedly religious or irreligious—one of friendship or enmity. But the members of this church were neither one thing nor the other. They had not piety, that would lead them to do anything for Christ, or be any honor to his cause; neither were they open enemies. They were lukewarm, insincere friends, and therefore in the very position to inflict the most serious injury on religion. Had they been open enemies to Christianity, their opposition had been little feared; but as pretended friends, they were able to inflict tenfold mischief. We always dread a professed but insincere friend. He is the least desirable of all relations. Such, we are led to suppose from the description was the Loadicean church; and Christ expressed his loathing of them in the forcible language, "I will spue thee out of my mouth." The figure is drawn from the natural disgust which the stomach exhibits in rejecting tepid or lukewarm water, which produces nausea and vomiting.

They are also farther described as contented with their condition, satisfied with the riches and pleasures in which they freely indulged themselves. They had perhaps become a rich, influential, aristocratic church, and they were congratulating themselves upon their proud position, and upon having everything they needed. Their condition was exceedingly prosperous; so they thought; but Christ says of them, that they were in a deplorable condition, as many churches like them are; being wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. They were in a state of sad destitution, wanting everything that was needful to make a prosperous church. They had no gold dug from the true mine of the Gospel—no raiment which could hide the nakedness and shame of the soul—no spiritual knowledge of the great truths of Christ's kingdom.

here recorded but His, who holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, and walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks—who is the first and the last—who was dead, and is alive again—the Son of God, whose eyes are as a flame of fire?

which determines the application of the language. Now if the reasons exist in one case, they do in another, and therefore in all ; and again, if there is any law or principle in the case, it is a uniform one ; for a law that has no uniformity, is no law. Besides, if there is no principle which determines the use of such language, then this is clearly an *unintelligible* revelation, as its meaning can never be definitely ascertained. It would be as if a writer used words in every variety of meaning, first in one sense and then in another, with peculiar meanings, too, of his own, and yet give us no chance to ascertain in what sense he did employ them in any given instance. No man has any right thus to abuse language ; and we may lay it down as conceded in the beginning, that God has not so done in communicating with his creatures. There is no book the wide world around in which the language of common life is used with such accuracy as in the Bible ; and we may be sure that there is a key that unlocks the symbolical language of Scripture, it would be derogatory to the Divine character to suppose otherwise. There must be some ground on which certain symbols are chosen to represent certain objects ; and not others ; and the reasons that determine their original choice and application, will determine with equal certainty their interpretation.

What, then, is the nature of the language employed in this revelation, and what the key to its interpretation ?

In the ordinary communications of our thoughts, we employ arbitrary signs and sounds, which become intelligible, because we have agreed universally to affix to them a definite meaning. We call a certain object a horse, not that there is any resemblance whatever between that sound and the animal designated. But we have agreed that that sound shall belong to that object. So we have agreed that the written characters, h-o-r-s-e, shall designate to the eye the same thing, these characters being just as arbitrary as the sound. Thus, our whole spoken language is made up of

liar characteristic that property is. This is symbolical or hieroglyphic language, which is common to a greater or less extent to all people. It is language, too, that is equally intelligible to all, however varied the tongues they may speak. Spoken and written language by means of arbitrary signs, were both, doubtless, originally a gift from God to the human race, communicated directly from heaven. Symbolical language was a human contrivance, being easily within the reach of the ordinary ingenuity of men. The first attempts they would put forth to convey thought in a written form, would be by symbolic and not alphabetical characters, the former being the most natural and easy. Thus the ancient records upon the monuments of Egypt and other nations are of this description. One fact, also, is sufficient to establish the point that this language has a definite meaning, which is, that learned men, at the distance of three or four thousand years, and men, too, of other countries, have unraveled the mystery of these hieroglyphics, and read the inscriptions upon these ancient monuments. They accomplished this work, too, without having the key put in their hands. They had not a number of the characters already explained to begin with. The characters were all entirely unknown, and yet, by comparison and careful study, they were enabled to decipher the meaning. I do not mean to imply, of course, that the symbolic language of Scripture is the same with that now alluded to. There are various kinds of hieroglyphics, which are very different from each other; but there are fixed laws governing each class, and principles on which they are constructed. They are not arbitrary, as the alphabetical sounds of a language.

The Apocalypse now is written in this symbolic language, though by no means confined to this book. The same is scattered widely through the sacred volume. We have also very many of the symbols fully and clearly explained; so many of them, that they give us the key to the whole. I

symbols is settled, and the principle on which they are interpreted made clear.

In the Apocalypse itself, also, many points are explained. "The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven candlesticks are the seven churches." A virgin bride, the spouse of Christ, is taken to represent the church, while a harlot is the symbol of an idolatrous church, and adultery and fornication its corrupt worship. In ch. xvii. is a particular interpretation of many points, in the vision of this harlot sitting upon the scarlet colored beast. "The ten horns are ten kings." "The waters are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." "And the woman is that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth."

It is evident now that *the great law of symbolic language is founded on analogy*. It describes not the object itself, but an analogous one.

The term symbol is derived from two Greek words, signifying to compare, and is defined by Webster, "The sign or representation of any moral thing by the images or properties of natural things. Thus, the lion is the *symbol* of courage; the lamb is the *symbol* of meekness or patience." Horne, in his Introduction to the study of the Bible, says, "By symbols we mean certain representative marks, rather than express pictures; or, if pictures, such as were at the time *characters*, and besides presenting to the eye the resemblance of a particular object, suggested a general idea to the mind, as when a *horn* was made to denote *strength*, an *eye* and *sceptre*, *majesty*, and in numberless such instances; where the picture was not drawn to express merely the thing itself, but something else, which was, or was conceived to be analogous to it." The main idea, then, as expressed in both these definitions, is the representation of an object not by the picture of itself, but something analogous, as the exhibition of moral qualities, by images drawn from nature; though

semblances, it is clear that, as those resemblances are laid in the nature of things, there must be a definiteness and certainty of meaning in them which cannot attach to arbitrary sounds; and that they must be applied according to fixed laws, which cannot alter. There is nothing in the nature of the thing that would prevent us from applying the term horse to a tiger, elephant, ox, lamb, or anything else, if we had only agreed so to do—arbitrary sounds can be arbitrarily applied—but we violate nature to make a lamb the symbol of a blood-thirsty tyrant, or a tiger a man of mild and gentle spirit. The law of analogy, therefore, must be carried out in the use of symbols, and a proper correspondence kept up. No man can employ them as he pleases; he must follow nature strictly.

This develops an important fact, which I will endeavor to illustrate somewhat fully.

Symbols are drawn from every part of the universe—from animate and inanimate creation—from things above and below, in heaven and on earth, as well as objects of fancy, to which there is no corresponding object in existence, as a beast with seven heads and ten horns. In the selection, however, a proper correspondence is observed of character and quality. For example, if the history of the church and its spiritual affairs are to be symbolized, some analogous object is chosen as their representative, that is nobler in itself than would be taken to set forth the civil history of an empire; for the reason that the church is in the Divine estimation of infinitely greater importance, and occupies a far more honorable position, than a civil kingdom. Thus stars are chosen as the symbols of Christian ministers, while horns of animals represent kingly dynasties. A woman, clothed with the sun, the moon at her feet, and a crown of twelve stars upon her head, is made the symbol of the church; while a dragon represents the Roman empire. Locusts, with tails of scorpions, symbolize the Saracens of Mahomet; while two witnesses re-

present the followers of Christ. Thus, throughout, a symmetry is preserved, the symbol having a dignity corresponding to the object it is designed to represent. It would violate the nature of symbolic language to choose a low and degrading symbol as the representative of an object of great dignity and grandeur—the analogy could not be preserved. We may, therefore, to no inconsiderable extent, determine at once, from the origin and nature of a symbol, where to look for its fulfillment. We shall find, accordingly, that the political affairs of the empire and the world are represented by objects drawn from an inferior department from those which set forth the great spiritual history of the church. The department of nature is chosen for the former—that of human or angelic life for the latter.

This same principle of analogy is carried out in another particular. Where active agents are employed as symbols, they represent also living intelligent agents—while the acts of the one represent analogous actions in the other—and effects produced by the symbolic agent represent analogous effects resulting from the action of the true agent; in other words, agents symbolize agents—actions symbolize actions—and effects symbolize effects. This is carrying out the analogy perfectly; and if were not so—if agents could represent actions and effects, as well as analogous agents—all would be in inextricable confusion. An illustration of the above we may see in Daniel's beasts. They are active agents, and represent kings or dynasties of kings. The actions of those beasts are plainly the actions of the kings, while the devastating effects produced in assailing and devouring represent also the wasting destruction brought on the nations by these conquering kingdoms.

Again, the same analogy is obviously carried out in another particular. Where the enemies of God and destructive agents are intended, symbols of a corresponding ferocious and desolating character are chosen, while the peaceful, bene-

volent agencies of the gospel are represented by symbols of an equally benign character. An anti-christian, persecuting government is symbolized by a carnivorous wild beast, tearing, devouring, and stamping beneath its feet. The pest of Mohammedanism is a dense smoke issuing from the bottomless pit, and darkening the heavens. The Saracens are swarms of locusts with stings of scorpions. The invasion of the Roman empire by Genseric and his Vandal hordes, is symbolized by a volcanic mountain, spreading its streams of molten lava in every direction. On the other hand, a church is a candlestick—its pastor a beautiful star—the whole church a virgin bride—the glorious body of the reformers an angel with a rainbow upon his head. We can see at once, also, that this law cannot be changed, because it is founded in nature. Scorpion locusts could not be taken to represent the true people of God—nor a chaste virgin, the apostate church of Rome—nor a wild beast, the faithful ministers of Christ; the analogy of character must be preserved.

It will be necessary to notice one necessary exception to the law of symbolic language, though perhaps we should hardly call it an exception. The fact to which I have reference shows only the more strikingly the principle which we have just developed. From what has already been stated, it will be seen that symbols are not *words*, but *things*, chosen to represent others, because of some resemblance. Obviously now there are some few objects to which no other resembling thing in the universe can be found, and which, therefore, cannot properly be symbolized. It is easy to give them arbitrary names, as we do in the language of common life; but if they are of a peculiar nature, unlike anything else, they cannot be symbolized. Thus, Jehovah cannot be represented by any analogous object, for “To whom will ye liken God, or what likeness will ye compare unto him?” When he, therefore, is described, (ch. 4.) he is represented as one of inexpressible glory, seated on his everlasting throne, and all the bright in-

telligences of heaven bowing before him, but no symbol of him is given.

For the same reason the martyrs, in their disembodied state, are described in the fifth seal without any symbol, as "the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held." There is no object analogous to a disembodied spirit, and none, therefore, which could represent it—from the necessity of the case, they are described under their own appropriate character and name.

The same principle applies to the person of our glorious Redeemer. No created intelligence could be employed as a fit representative of him. Men could not: and when angels are taken as symbols, it is to denote distinguished human agencies. There is, therefore, no analogous agent that can represent the infinite dignity of him who thinks it no robbery to claim equality with God. We find, accordingly, that Jesus Christ appears in his own person, proclaiming his own name and attributes, and not in the character of another. Thus he revealed himself in vision to John, as "one like unto the son of man"—for such he was—but at the same time distinctly announcing, "I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." There were symbols connected with his person, setting forth his various offices and his glorious majesty; yet he appears for himself in his own person, and proclaims his own eternal name. So in ch. 5, Christ is presented again in his own character as the Lamb slain, "the Lion of the tribe of Juda—the Root of David," before whom all the redeemed company fall down and worship, saying, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." Again, in ch. 19, he appears once more as "the Faithful and True," whose "name is called the Word of God." "And he hath on his

vesture and on his thigh a name written, "*King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.*"

This makes it clear that Jesus Christ does not appear in the Revelation in the person or character of another. There is none of equal worth to represent his infinite dignity, and he comes proclaiming his own majestic name.

This same principle likewise must hold good in every similar case, where the nature of any subject forbids its symbolization; there being no analogous object in another department which can properly represent it, there the description must, from necessity, be literal. With this exception, all the objects presented to us in this book are exhibited under their appropriate symbols. A glorious and stupendous panoramic scene passes before our vision, which well deserves our study, and upon which we may gaze in astonished wonder. Sometimes the scene is laid in heaven, and then again on earth. At one time, heaven is opened to our view, and we behold the eternal throne with the glorious intelligences of that world bowing in adoring reverence before it; while, anon, the songs of the innumerable company of the redeemed fall upon our ears. Then the scene is transferred to earth, and its actors and events pass before our eyes. The grand subject of the history is the church of God—the church militant and triumphant—the church in conflict with its mighty foes, oppressed and afflicted, but defended by the arm of Omnipotence—and the church victorious over all her enemies, dwelling in security within the glorious city of the New Jerusalem, the paradise of God. In entering upon this sublime and thrilling history, may the Spirit of God enlighten our minds to understand the Scriptures, and by grace, may we be led to join the company of his people, to share their glorious eternal destiny.

SERMON V.

Chap. 4.—After this I looked, and behold a door was opened in heaven ; and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me, which said, Come up hither and I will show thee things which must be hereafter ; and immediately I was in the spirit, and behold a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne, and he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone ; and there was a rainbow round about the throne in sight like unto an emerald. And round about the throne were four-and-twenty seats ; and upon the seats I saw four-and-twenty elders sitting clothed in white raiment, and they had on their heads crowns of gold. And out of the throne proceeded lightnings, and thunderings, and voices ; and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God. And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal ; and in the midst of the throne and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind. And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle. And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him ; and they were full of eyes within ; and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. And when those beasts give glory, and honor, and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, the four-and-twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power, for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

It is probable that the Apocalypse was communicated to John in parts, and not as a whole at one time. This seems to be implied in the words, “after this I looked,” as if the vision described in the first chapter had been interrupted, and here resumed again. This is confirmed by the statement of the next verse, that upon his receiving the call to “come up hither,” he says, “and immediately I was in the spirit,” or prophetic vision, implying its previous interruption.

The scene presented to us in the opening of the grand panorama is laid in heaven ; and in it we have a glorious

vision of the uncreated Deity. John beheld a door opened in heaven, setting forth the fact, that that unseen world was open for his inspection, and that its secrets were partially to be revealed. A voice of trumpet loudness summoned him to ascend, that he might look in upon the scenes of the inner sanctuary, and behold the things that were to be hereafter.

Thus ascending, and casting his eye within the opened veil, the first object that met his vision and absorbed his soul was the eternal throne, and him that was seated thereon. This was the central object to draw his wondering gaze, and around which all the glorious forms of that world revolved. There is, however, no proper symbol of the Deity here presented to us ; for the reason heretofore given, that there is no analogous object in the universe that can be taken as his representative. Jehovah, therefore, appears in his own person, unrepresented by another. John beheld a throne, but that was a symbol, not of Jehovah himself, but of his supreme sovereignty. There was one seated there, separate from the throne itself. Neither is it stated that a jasper and a sardine stone were upon the throne. This would have been symbolizing the Deity by such object. But a living one was seated there, “and he that sat was *to look upon like* a jasper and a sardine stone. In other words, his appearance was inexpressibly glorious, to be likened only to the most resplendent gems. No material form is given him, nor is he likened to anything in heaven above nor in the earth beneath, nor in the waters under the earth. The jasper spoken of, in all probability, was the diamond. In ch. 21 : 11, the same is described “clear as crystal,” “a stone most precious ;” and is there taken to represent the exceeding glory of the new Jerusalem. The sardine stone was a brilliant gem of a red hue. The resplendent majesty and glory, therefore, of him who occupied the throne could be

compared only to the purity and dazzling brilliancy of the most precious stones.

Around the throne was a glorious rainbow of emerald clearness, a symbol of God's everlasting covenant of love and mercy. This rainbow was probably perfect, that is, a complete circle, as our rainbow would be, if it could come wholly into sight in our hemisphere. In that heavenly world there would be nothing to obstruct; and there, as we often observe a perfect halo round the moon, the eternal throne was girt around with this resplendent bow of emerald, the eternal and sure pledge of God's covenant faithfulness with his people in the work of redemption, as the natural bow on the cloud is the token of God's covenant that he will no more destroy the earth with the waters of a deluge.

Surrounding this throne, John beheld twenty-four seats or thrones, which were occupied by as many elders, in white robes, and crowns of gold upon their heads. In the midst also, and round about the throne, by which we may understand between the elders and the throne, were "four beasts," or living creatures. The word "beasts" is an unfortunate translation, being associated in our minds necessarily with the brute creation. It is not the word elsewhere in the Apocalypse translated beasts, and should not have been so rendered here. Its proper meaning is, living or immortal ones. These were full of eyes, before and behind, denoting their sleepless vigilance and superior intelligence. One had the aspect of a lion, the king of beasts, indicative of power and sway,—another of the calf, or more properly, the ox, the most valuable of domestic animals, and the symbol of patient labor,—the third of a man, the symbol of reason and intelligence,—and the fourth of a flying eagle, the king of birds, and the emblem of far-sighted, soaring vision. These living ones were also furnished with six wings each, denoting the perfect readiness and swiftness with which they fulfill the high commands of Him whom they unceasingly worship.

These twenty-four elders and four living ones are symbolic representatives of the redeemed company in heaven ; for they are particularly distinguished from the angelic throng ; and in the next chapter are presented to us, as singing the new song of redeeming love, describing themselves as those who were redeemed out of every kindred, and tongue, and people. What distinction is to be made between the elders and the living ones, I am unable to determine. Some suppose that the former represent the Old Testament Church, and the latter the new. Others make the elders to symbolize the body of believers, while the four living ones set forth the ministers of Christ, as taking the lead in the active service and worship of the Church. - Neither of these views seem satisfactory, and I express no opinion on the subject.

It is necessary to observe that this whole representation is not designed to symbolize anything now transpiring on earth, but the worship of heaven. We shall find that when earthly events are described, the scene of vision is laid upon the earth, or within the visible heavens ; and that when we are introduced into the sanctuary above, the secrets of the unseen world are brought to our view. This is a fact of no little importance to be borne in mind. We cannot bring this throne of Deity down to earth, to find any corresponding object here, nor the sea of crystal : and we cannot bring a part without the whole. The whole, therefore, is symbolic of the characters and scenes of the unseen world ; and in these elders and living ones we have the combined company of the redeemed, seated upon their thrones of victory, and with all their vast and immortal powers, engaged in the high service of Him whose throne they everlastingly surround. The pure and unceasing worship of such exalted intelligences well becomes the excellent majesty of Him who “ was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone.” The four living ones “ rest not day or night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord

Chap. 5.—And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the back side, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open, and to read the book, neither to look thereon. And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns, and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne. And when he had taken the book, the four beasts, and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.

THE Apocalypse opens with these words: "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass." In the present chapter, we have a symbolic representation of the above fact, and the glorious exaltation of Christ, the Redeemer of men, in the office which belongs to him alone, as able and worthy to reveal the Divine purposes.

The book or roll of parchment in the hand of God, was the symbol of his purposes in the carrying out of the scheme of redemption, or the future history of the church and the world. Its being written within and on the back side, indicated that those purposes were complete and full—they were all written out, and understood by Him who knoweth all things from the beginning: its being sealed, that the same were hidden and unrevealed. That book was in the

right hand of God ; in the hand then of his power, so that he was able to execute his plans, and none could alter or wrest them from him.

A mighty angel then appears as a herald, making proclamation with a loud voice, for any who could loose the seals and open the book. But it was not within the reach or prerogative of created intelligences to pry within those folded leaves, and reveal the secret counsels of the Infinite. No response was made to the summons. None was found of equal worth to break those seals, or read what was therein written. We are not to be led astray by the idea that there was in reality any such book as is here described. There was a symbolic book, but not a literal one ; and the inquiry, "who is worthy to open the book," means only, who *is* able to unfold the secret counsels of Jehovah ? And who is able ? Who, among the sons of earth or heaven, will dare step forth and declare himself equal to such a task ? Not one.

The emotion exhibited by John at the result, is designed to represent the intense, overwhelming interest that is to be attached to those great purposes of God, and the importance to the church of their being unfolded. John had been summoned to ascend up to heaven, that the "things which must be hereafter" might be shown him. Yet no one now was able to take the book out of the right hand of Him that sat upon the throne, and unfold its meaning. Well, therefore, might he weep much. He is informed, however, that there is one who "hath prevailed to open the book and to loose the seals thereof ;" even He, the lion of Juda's tribe, the Root of David. The word "prevailed" means not only that he was able and worthy to be the revealer of the Divine counsels, but that he had fought, or suffered, and obtained the victory to this very end. The literal idea is, he hath *conquered* to open the book. It is, therefore, in his capacity as Redeemer, and a suffering Redeemer, obtaining salvation by his own blood, that he is qualified for the work he here assumes.

John then beheld a Lamb, with the appearance of having

been slain, having seven horns and eyes, standing before the throne, in front of the elders and the living creatures. This was the position of the Lamb standing between the throne and the surrounding worshippers. He came forward and took the book, thus avouching his full ability to enter into all the secret counsels of Jehovah. It is Jesus Christ, evidently, that is here brought to our view, being symbolized in that great and peculiar aspect of his character which he assumed in the work of redemption. It can hardly be said that he is here properly symbolized by a lamb, for Christ is himself a lamb slain. That is the character he bears, as also the Lion of the tribe of Juda, and the Root of David. John, his forerunner, pointed him out to his disciples, as "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world." This is one of his own titles, and the one especially by which he is designated in the Apocalypse. The one hundred and forty and four thousand stand with "the Lamb upon Mount Zion. The same "sing the song of Moses and the Lamb." It is the "marriage supper of the Lamb" to which the redeemed are invited. Christ then is presented to us here in his own distinguishing character of a sacrifice for sins—a lamb slain, or, as it had been slain. The seven horns are symbols of his supreme and perfect sovereignty or power—the seven eyes are stated to be "the seven Spirits of God, sent forth into all the earth." He has the direction of the Holy Spirit's agency, as the supreme head of the church, all power having been committed to his hands; and it is for him to commission that Spirit to go forth in fulfillment of his great work in the regeneration of men.

As soon as the Lamb had taken the book for the purpose of unfolding its mysteries, and showing the things that must be hereafter, the whole redeemed and angelic throng begin the song of praise and joy. The four beasts and four and twenty elders, each one with harps and golden vials [censers] full of odors, which are the prayers of saints, first take up the joyful strain. The song is new, adapted to a new theme,

sung on a new occasion. "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain, and hath redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth." Here is the evidence that these living creatures and elders are the representatives of the redeemed sons of earth; for such they describe themselves to be. They sing the song which none others can sing. The reason given, also, why Christ is worthy to take the book and open the seals, is because he was slain, and by his blood accomplished the work of redemption. Thus is he exalted to the right hand of power; and conducting that glorious work, the secrets of the eternal counsels must be his, and he God over all blessed for ever. It is his prerogative therefore to unfold the Divine purposes. What is meant by their being made kings and priests unto God, and reigning on the earth, can be better explained hereafter.

This new and rapturous song of the redeemed was immediately caught by a greater multitude, an innumerable company of the angelic order, even ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, and with loud united voice did they swell the mighty anthem, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." Then, too, was the strain raised to loftier heights, and the stupendous chorus rolled round the universe, by every creature which is in heaven and on earth, and such as are under the earth, and all that are in them—saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. "Amen." And the four living creatures, "and the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever."

Where did human thought ever reach the conception of choir and music like these? God can give such sweetness

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7

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and power to a human voice on earth, as almost to entrance the soul with the melody of its song. But oh, what an oratorio will that be, when ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands sweeter seraph songsters shall swell the enrapturing strain! That music will be worthy to be offered to "Him that sitteth upon the throne and to the Lamb for ever and ever."

This vision also gives us a clear view of the position which Christ our Redeemer holds in the estimation of angels and the redeemed in heaven.

In the subsequent part of this book, we shall have unfolded the dark and dreadful history of antichrist, or the fearful apostacies in the church, pre-eminent among which, by reason of its monstrous blasphemies and its mysterious depths of iniquity, is "that man of sin, the Son of perdition." In this history we shall see how the rights and prerogatives of Christ, as the supreme Head of the church, have been usurped; and what blasphemous claims have been set up against him. It is most highly appropriate, therefore, in the opening of this great drama, that we should be carried up in vision to the unseen world, and there be permitted to witness the glorious exaltation of him who conducts this revelation, and claims to be head over all things to his church. What station does he occupy there? What honors does he receive from the lofty intelligences which surround the eternal throne?

How clearly then does the symbolic scene before us separate Jesus Christ from all the creation of God, drawing a broad and eternal gulf between them? The proclamation was made through the universe for any of the sons of earth or heaven to step forth, who might be worthy to take into his hand the book of God's purposes. But no finite being dared answer to that call. None presumed thus to invade the sacred precincts of the Deity. They all stood ready in waiting attitude to hear its awful contents, when the leaves should be unfolded; but, with one consent, they renounced all claim for themselves of being found worthy to the re-

SERMON VI.

Chap. 6 : 1-2.—And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts, saying, Come and see. And I saw, and behold, a white horse : and he that sat on him had a bow ; and a crown was given unto him : and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

WE have now reached the point where the thrilling interest of this book commences, and to which all that proceeds is but introductory. Here begin the prophecies concerning the future, the unfolding of the events to be. This is set forth in the opening of the seals by the Lamb. As the seals are broken, and the contents of the roll unfolded, we have the great prophecies of this book respecting the church brought to our view, under their appropriate symbols. The contents of six seals are presented in this and the following chapters ; the seventh and last occupies the remainder of the volume.

In respect to the plan of historic narrative, I would simply state here what will be made very plain hereafter, that the events are given in series or by subjects, and not by centuries. A particular theme is taken up, and its history followed out to the end. The narrative then returns, and follows out another in the same way, thus making the book to consist of many distinct and parallel series, running over the same ground. This fact has escaped the observation of the great body of the commentators ; and not comprehending this plan of the narrative, they have been led into many errors of interpretation. I merely state this now as the plan, without attempting to prove it. The proof will come hereafter in the developement of the prophecies, and the point made clear.

Upon the opening of the first seal, John was summoned in a voice of thunder by one of the four living creatures to draw

near, when he beheld a rider upon a white horse, with bow and crown, going forth to victory. The symbol is that of a victorious warrior—being drawn from the military and civil life of the Romans. Let me call particular attention to this fact. The symbol is not that of a wild beast, nor any inanimate object of nature, such as a mountain, river, sea, or heavenly body, but one of great dignity and excellence, drawn from human life; a warrior horseman, and he, as denoted by various insignia, a conqueror. He rode a white horse, such as victors used in a triumphal procession. The bow and crown, likewise, were tokens of victory. It is stated also in addition, that he went forth “conquering,” or with the insignia of a conqueror—“and to conquer,” or to make conquests.

While the great body of the commentators agree in referring this symbol to the early spread and triumphs of the Gospel, they mostly fail in giving its full force and real import. Some represent Christ as the rider, going forth to his beneficent conquests in the conversion of sinners through his Word and Spirit. We have seen, however, that when he appears upon the scene, he does so under his own name and character, so as to leave the matter in no doubt. He proclaims himself “the first and the last, the Alpha and Omega,” or has upon his vesture his name written, “King of kings, and Lord of lords.” As there is nothing of this kind in the vision before us, we may be certain that Christ is not the conqueror described. Not one name or attribute peculiar to him is specified.

Others, agreeing in the general application of the symbol, make it to represent the Gospel in its early triumphs. But every one will perceive, readily, that there is no analogy between a horseman and the Gospel of Christ: one being a living, active agent, the other a system of revealed truth. All congruity and appropriateness in the representation are wanting.

Where, then, shall we find the object which answers fully to the symbol? We find it in the *faithful ministers of Christ*, who went forth, in obedience to his command, to disciple all nations.

I will now give the reasons which shut us up to this interpretation, forbidding us to adopt any other.

In the first place, we have a symbol of no common dignity and excellence, and we want an object of corresponding character. The symbol, also, is one of mild and beneficent agency, indicated by the purity or whiteness of the horse on which the rider was seated. Both of these characteristics meet most eminently in the faithful ministers of the early church. Again, the symbol is drawn from the military and civil life of the Romans. Now, by the laws of symbolization, a symbol never represents an object like itself, that being contrary to its very nature. A wild beast does not represent a succession of wild beasts, but something of analogous character, which we must find in another department. Seven fat and lean cattle do not represent the same thing, but something analogous, that is, seven years of plenty and famine. So, likewise, this warrior horseman does not represent a real warrior like himself, for this would be to destroy its character as a *symbol*. It must be verified in some analogous conqueror, not the same. We must of necessity, therefore, go out of the department of civil life, from which the symbol is taken, to find in some other the object which it represents. You may observe now how closely we are shut up to the truth. There are only two different series of events described in the Apocalypse: one, the religious history of the church; the other, the political history of certain nations, as they stand connected with the church. But the symbol of the present vision is drawn from one of these departments, the civil life of the Romans. Going out, therefore, from that department to find the corresponding analogous object, the only one into which we can go is the religious history of the church.

Chap. 6: 3—4. And when he had opened the second seal I heard the second beast say, Come and see. And there went out another horse, that was red; and power was given to him that sat thereon, to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another; and there was given unto him a great sword.

THE symbol of this seal is a warrior upon a red horse, armed with a great sword, and going forth to take peace from the earth, and to kill. It is drawn, therefore, from the same source as the one of the preceding seal, differing only in the character of the horseman and the object of his mission. In referring now this symbol to the wars of the Roman emperors, as many do, they commit the radical mistake of taking the vision in its literal meaning, and thereby destroying its symbolic character altogether. If by this red horseman we are to understand a real warrior, such as the emperors were in the wars which they waged, then on the same principle, and to make a consistent exposition, a wild beast must mean a succession of similar animals—locusts must literally be taken for swarms of locusts; and a woman sitting upon a scarlet colored beast with seven heads and ten horns, for similar objects. No commentator commits such a mistake in these instances, for the absurdity would be too palpable. These, they tell us, are *symbols*, and so to be interpreted, not referring to the same, but analogous objects. But there is the same reason precisely, wanting the gross absurdity, why this warrior horseman should not mean a literal warrior, or his taking peace from the earth, literal war with the sword. These are symbols to be interpreted on the same principles that we do beasts and locusts and horns and earthquakes and hail. If we take some as literal, we must take them all so: if we refer some to analogous objects, we must make the same reference with all. On this ground, we may at once, and with certainty, set aside all those interpretations which refer this seal to bloody wars and massacres in the Roman empire. It has no such reference.

Taking the laws of symbolic language, we will endeavor

to follow them, and find the object designed to be set forth. We have a symbol in its main features like that of the preceding seal—one of unusual dignity—a living, active agent—and drawn from the military and civil life of the Romans. The object, then, which it represents, is not to be found in that department, but in another. For the same reason, also, as given under the first seal, we must go into the spiritual history of the church, as analogous to the secular history of the empire.

Notice now the peculiar characteristics of this horseman, and wherein he differs from him of the first seal. He has a red horse, denoting something very opposite from the peace, purity and benignity of the white, and that is, hatred, strife and discord. His mission was to take peace from the earth, or to destroy the quiet and harmony of the church, instead of obtaining glorious spiritual conquests, as did the first horseman. Instead, also, of a victor's crown, there was given unto him "a great sword," denoting usurpation and power; and with it they killed one another; not literally destroying natural life, for that is the symbol itself, and represents the destruction of spiritual life and piety in the church, or rather, perhaps, the cutting of persons off by violence from the church, and dooming them to destruction.

Where now shall we find the objects which meet these requisitions of the symbol? Who are the living, active agents in the church, producing dissension, strife and hatred, instead of promoting peace and purity—usurping power and exercising authority, instead of laboring to extend the beneficent conquests of truth—destroying the spiritual life of the church, and wielding the tremendous power of excommunication, which, as one able commentator suggests, is doubtless the "great sword" of this horseman, and corresponding in perfect analogy with it.

Have we not here set forth in most vivid colors the *usurping clergy* of the church? And in the change of the

white to the red horseman, have we not exhibited that great change which took place in the ministry from what Christ constituted it, to that which afterwards developed itself in diocesan episcopacy? Even among the apostles, before they came to understand aright the principles and policy of our Saviour's kingdom, there was this same strife for place and power, each one jealous to obtain the highest post, and be appointed prime minister or pope. Christ, however, effectually suppressed this worldly spirit, and taught them differently. "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." Matt. 20: 26. This was the law of Christ's spiritual kingdom. There were to be no lords or princes, exercising dominion and authority; and its only titled nobility was to consist of those honored ones who labored and suffered most for their Divine Master. Any inverting of this fundamental law would prove the inevitable injury, and even subversion of the church as the body of Christ.

In the second seal, now, we have delineated the beginning of this great revolution—the change from the white horse to the red—the substitution of the sword for the crown—of those who aspired to rule and exercise authority, for them who were content to minister and suffer for Christ; thus taking peace from the church, and bringing in a desolating flood of discord, jealousies, and burning hatred. The portraiture of this mighty revolution was a worthy theme of prophetic revelation, for herein was the commencement of that great apostacy, which was completed in the full development of "the Man of Sin:" while almost every mind will feel, that the wars of the Roman emperors for two or three centuries, and their contentions for the imperial crown, hav-

Chap. 6: 5-6.—And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo, a black horse; and he that sat upon him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.

THIS symbol is likewise a horseman, different only in his characteristics. He is seated on a black horse, denoting something of a dark and appalling nature. He has no bow or sword in his hand, but instead thereof a pair of balances for weighing food, which is proclaimed to be sold at an exorbitant rate—"a measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny." The penny, or denarius, was equal to twelve or fifteen cents of our money, and was the ordinary wages of a day laborer. In one of the parables of our Saviour, the householder is represented as hiring laborers at a penny a day, which was full wages. The measure or choenix of wheat was the usual allowance of food to a man for one day; so that it required a day's wages to provide food sufficient for one person. This shows an enormous price fixed upon these staple productions of life. In ordinary times the penny would procure from sixteen to twenty measures of wheat, instead of one; or from fifty to sixty of barley, instead of three.

"And see thou hurt not the oil and the wine." This clause has greatly perplexed commentators, and many different interpretations have been given of it, which for the most part, however, are only offered as conjectures. The following view, taken from Lord's Exposition, gives a most satisfactory and forcible meaning, and puts the whole subject in a very clear light.

The taxes required in the Roman empire, to sustain the court and civil service, the army and desolating wars, and the hungry brood of office-holders, as well as to provide largesses to the soldiers, were excessive in the extreme, so as to prove an almost insupportable burden to the people. The ordinary and economical expenses of the government

were great; but when we take into view that during a period of seventy-two years previous to Diocletian, there were twenty-six individuals who held the imperial crown, beside a great number of unsuccessful aspirants, and that each of these must secure the favor of the army and the people by large donations of money, we may well conceive that the taxes and exactions laid to raise the needed amount must have proved a crushing burden. They were so great as sometimes to strip men of their wealth, and reduce them to poverty. These were laid upon everything that could be brought into service. Nothing was too insignificant to escape; all the products of the soil, of course, fruit trees, and vines. The taxes might be paid in money, or in produce, grain, fruit, oil, or whatever else it might be; but in such cases the articles were received at a fixed valuation, namely, the one stated in the text, "A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny," which, of course, was enormously high, and excessively exacting. When a farmer was compelled to pay a tax of one hundred dollars in wheat, rated at the value of a penny for a measure, which was sixteen or twenty times its ordinary price, we may conceive something of what the ruinous oppression of the government must have been. The exactions were so excessive that the people were led to avoid them in every possible mode, as men always will in such circumstances. One mode adopted for this purpose was by mutilating their vines and fruit trees, so as to secure a lower assessment, which took place once in fifteen years, a Roman indiction. When the year of assessment came round, they would "hurt" their olive trees and vines, to secure a low valuation of this property from the government officer, the assessment being made according to the amount of the yield. We actually find also, among the Roman laws, enactments of great severity against such as "feign poverty, or cut a vine, or stint the fruit of a tree," in order to avoid a fair valuation; the penalty

being the death of the offender, and the confiscation of all his property. Such a penalty shows both that the offence was committed, and that the exactions of the government were of the most excessive character inducing thereto.

The facts thus stated give us a clear insight into the nature of the symbol, which is that of a Roman magistrate, prepared to enforce his severe exactions upon the people at the rate of a measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; with the solemn injunction accompanying, "See thou hurt not the oil and the wine," or the olive trees and the vines.

This symbol, then, like the preceding, is drawn from the civil life of the Romans, and presents to us a living, active agent of no ordinary dignity. For the same reasons as heretofore given, we must go into the church, and among its teachers and rulers find the corresponding representative. They are the rider upon the black horse, laying their exactions upon the bread or the word of life, in the same manner that the Roman magistrate laid his heavy taxes upon the bread, and oil, and wine, which were the great necessities of life. By this means a spiritual famine was produced, and the people perished for lack of vision.

About the beginning of the third century, the ministers of religion had, to a great extent, ceased to preach any of the important doctrines of the Gospel. The whole system of revealed truth was obscured and set aside by the commandments of men, while the people were carefully instructed in the doctrines of baptismal regeneration, and the saving virtues of the Eucharist. The Platonic ideas respecting the nature of sin and the means of regeneration were adopted—making sin to find its seat in the body, and sanctification to consist in the mortification of all its appetites and desires. According to this, a holy life was found in fasting, celibacy, self-inflicted torture, and separation from human society. Men lived in deserts, caves, and mountains, in order to attain

SERMON VII.

Chap. 6: 7-8.—And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. And I looked, and behold a pale horse; and his name that sat upon him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

THE more common interpretation of this vision is, as with the preceding, to take it in its literal sense, and thus destroy its symbolic character. This view is embodied in the celebrated painting of "Death on the pale horse," where Death is exhibited as the rider, going forth with war, pestilence, famine, and wild beasts, to ravage the Roman empire. These, we are told, followed as natural consequences of the desolating ravages of the red and black horsemen. Bloody wars and famine had raged, and now appeared Death on his pale horse following, employing all the instruments of destruction combined—war, pestilence, famine, and wild beasts. We are informed, also, that grievous pestilences did prevail of the most fearful character; and that the ravages of war, disease, and famine together, in some parts of the Roman empire, were so terrible that regions of country were almost depopulated, and the inhabitants could not make head against the wild beasts, which multiplied and ravaged the land.

The fatal objection lies against this interpretation, that it takes the literal meaning instead of the symbolic; while, in addition, there is confusion introduced into the whole picture. If the red horseman with the great sword is a symbol of war and its desolations, and the black of the dread ravages of famine, it is altogether incongruous to make

a third distinct symbol of Death itself, destroying with the sword and famine. This was the very representation of the two symbols preceding. The destruction of course took place under the ravages of these horsemen. We do not, therefore, need a separate symbol, under the fourth seal, to set forth the effects of the two that had gone before.

What then is the symbolic meaning of the vision? We have a horseman, as before, indicating clearly that the agent intended is one of the same general character, though different in his features. The horse was of a pale, livid, or cadaverous hue, pointing out an agent of a ghastly, terrible nature. Seated on this horse was a living rider, who bore the terrific name of Death, or, as in the original, The Death, by way of emphasis. Death itself, literally, was not the rider. That is not stated. But John beheld a living rider, whose dread "name" was Death, or The Destroyer—and "Hell," or the grave, his attendant messenger. Power was given to him over the fourth part of the earth, and his mission was to kill (symbolically). The agents of destruction which he employed were four—the sword, famine, death or pestilence, and the beasts of the earth. The first two were the same with those in the hands of the red and black horsemen. The great sword of the former we interpreted to mean, usurped ecclesiastical authority, dominion over the conscience, and the terrible power of excommunication. By hunger is intended that spiritual famine of the bread of life, which is produced by laying exactions upon the word of God, and so bringing in the reign of ignorance, error, and superstition. The third instrument of destruction was death, or deadly disease, which is a fit symbol of false and blasphemous doctrines, breathed forth like a destroying pestilence, and blasting every thing within its reach. The fourth was the beasts of the earth: and nothing is more clear than that a beast stands as a symbol of a tyrannical, persecuting civil government.

With these explanations we shall have no difficulty in identifying this rider of the pale horse, whose name was Death, and the grave his appropriate attendant—whose mission was to destroy, by the exercise of usurped dominion in the church, or ecclesiastical despotism—by placing the Word of God under interdict, and thus producing spiritual famine—by breathing forth a pestilence of false doctrines—and by the employment of the arm of civil power. Place this horseman by the side of him of the first seal, and you have the most perfect contrast possible. You have a faithful but terrible delineation of the change which took place in the ministry of the church, when, passing through the successive stages of development, they appeared at last upon their ghastly pale horse, having reached the zenith of their ecclesiastical power; their awful mission, to destroy, instead of win the peaceful triumphs of the cross—Death now their name, and hell following in their train.

This horseman, therefore, represents the later stages of the church's corruption in the development of ecclesiastical usurpation and ambition, or the succession of Metropolitans, Archbishops, and Patriarchs, the superior prelates, who came into existence during the fourth century, and perfected the system of spiritual despotism. None of these higher orders of the clergy were known before the reign of Constantine, the first Christian emperor, who occupied the throne of the Cæsars, and protected religion by law. Under him an ecclesiastical hierarchy was established, modelled after the empire. Previous to this time, there had been no higher authority in the church than a bishop, having jurisdiction over the clergy within a given district. But now the bishops of a province were placed in subordination to a Metropolitan, and the latter in turn to a Patriarch or Archbishop—the Patriarchs also taking precedence of each other, according to the importance or rank of the city where they resided—Rome being the first, and Constantinople the next in

order. The Patriarch of Rome finally became the Pope, or head of the Latin church, and the Patriarch of Constantinople the head of the Greek church.

I cannot speak with certainty, as to the precise meaning of "the fourth part of the earth" over which dominion was given to this pale horseman. Perhaps it points out the extent to which these ecclesiastical usurpations had advanced in the church.

It is not necessary to say much to verify, by history, the truth of this symbol as above interpreted. The facts are, doubtless, sufficiently before the minds of this congregation, for them to see a terrible force in the symbolic scene of this rider on the livid horse—that his mission has indeed been to kill with the great sword of ecclesiastical power, shutting and opening heaven to whomsoever he pleased—to kill, too, by spiritual famine, taking away the key of knowledge, and forbidding access to the oracles of eternal truth—to kill also by the most pestiferous, blasphemous doctrines which human lips ever promulgated; and finally, to kill with the arm of civil power. Every one will be struck with the remarkable fulfillment of this last characteristic, in the fact that ecclesiastical despotism has always made a tool of the civil government, to carry out its own dark and hellish purposes. The wild beasts of the earth have been the fit and willing instruments of this terrible horseman, ready at all times to do his bidding. In all strictly Roman Catholic countries, the civil government is only a cipher and a tool. The church is the real power, controlling everything, and the ecclesiastics are the rulers of the kingdom. But if any dark work of persecution is to be accomplished, the wild beast is let loose to fall upon the helpless victims, and make them a prey. If charged, however, with the bloody work, they are ready to reply, Oh, we never persecute—see, there is no blood upon our hands—it is those wild beasts whose fangs are red with

gore ; yet the leash that binds the savage monsters is in their hands.

Some commentators have applied this symbol more definitely to popery. I have no doubt that it includes popery as a part. But the papacy was but one development of that ecclesiastical usurpation which was spread over the whole church. In the West it gave rise to the Romish hierarchy ; in the East to the Patriarchates of the Greek, Armenian, Syrian, Nestorian and other churches. It was all one and the same thing. Besides this, we have the history of the papacy separately and minutely drawn out in another place, under the symbol of the two-horned beast ; so that in the comprehensive history of the corruption of the church embraced in these seals, it is much more appropriate to make the pale horseman include the whole system of metropolitanism, instead of a single development of it in the Latin branch.

Where now, let me pause here to ask, can you find in the compass of human writings such a thrilling history as is embodied in these eight verses, and set forth in the symbols of these four opened seals ? What a history is here portrayed, and with what master strokes of power ! What human genius could have conceived such a mighty scope of thought, and compressed it all into such a scene of symbolic imagery ? There is the impress of Divinity here, speaking from every line.

What beauty and consistency of interpretation too are there, in referring all these horsemen to the ministers of the church, thus representing the gradual changes in that ministry by the character of the successive riders ! The symbols are the same throughout in their main features, drawn from the same source. We have accordingly given them the same general application. First go forth the faithful, devoted ministers of Christ upon the white horse, preaching the

martyred saints are presented, appealing to God for a righteous vindication of their blood. The question arises, are these souls, seen by John, symbols of something else? or are they properly what they are here designated,—“the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held?” They were evidently the latter, and they appear under their own name and character, because they cannot properly be symbolized. They were disembodied spirits; and what is there of analogous nature to represent such? Angels would not, for when they symbolize anything, it is some living agent of distinguished eminence on earth. Nor can any other object be selected that would answer the end. They therefore appear for themselves under their own appropriate names, and described in their own characters, as those “that were slain for the word of God.”

These souls were seen “under the altar,” that is, at the foot of the altar, which is the same as that described ch. 8: 3, And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. The heavenly world is thus presented to us symbolized after the sanctuary of the temple, in which stood the altar of incense. Some have supposed that the altar of burnt-offering was here referred to, and symbolized the living sacrifice which these martyrs had made of themselves to God. But there is no mention made of an altar of burnt-offering in heaven; neither is it true that these saints were offered as sacrificial victims. Christ gave his own soul a sacrifice for sin, and these his people were slain because of their attachment to the word of God, and the testimony which they bore to the crucified one.

The altar spoken of, then, must be the altar of incense; and they are seen here, because they are in the attitude of intercession with God, pleading for the avenging of their blood.

Their interceding cries were ascending before the throne. Where then could they be seen more appropriately than at the altar, where the prayers of all saints were offered with much incense? Ch. 8: 3.

The cry of these martyred ones implies the expectation on their part, which, too, was a well founded one, of the approaching overthrow of the antichristian persecuting powers by which they had suffered—a surprise also that the day of their destruction had not come ere this—and that the period of persecution had been permitted to continue so long. “How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?”

The history of the church, as developed under the preceding seals, gives peculiar significancy and force to this interceding appeal to God. The civil power of pagan Rome had, for three centuries, been employed to crush the cause of Christ; while thousands and tens of thousands had, during this period, suffered martyrdom for the testimony of Jesus. Ten different seasons of most bitter trial of this kind were experienced by the people of God, when they were hunted like beasts of prey, and the arm of civil power was stretched forth for their extermination. And when pagan Rome ceased this cruel work, upon the accession of Constantine, it was found that the sword had only changed hands; a spiritual ecclesiastical despotism having grown up, which was to wage a war of extermination against the true servants of the Lord, even more fierce and bitter than that through which they had already passed. The church was now to be made the arena for the terrible coursings of the pale horseman; and the great sword of ecclesiastical power was now to be drunk with the blood of the martyrs. It was doubtless in view of these later persecutions that the cry of the slain went up, “O Lord, how long?”

Many, applying the symbols of the horsemen to the wars of the Roman emperors, and the famine and desolation which followed as their results, refer this cry of the martyrs to an

earlier period—to those who suffered under the persecutions of the pagan empire—and that they were looking forward to the overthrow of paganism and the establishment of Christianity under Constantine, as the time of their being avenged on their enemies. But this is a very inadequate and limited view of the subject. The time of persecution did not cease upon the overthrow of paganism, any more than it did upon the death of Nero. Antichrist was yet to succeed—the church's most cruel, unrelenting foe. The great persecuting power was to arise, even great Babylon; and were not the saints to be avenged in her overthrow also? Most certainly they were; and the time of avenging judgment was not to come until the final destruction of all these enemies of God, and the arresting of the entire work of persecution.

It was therefore during the dominancy of the rider upon the pale horse especially, that the cry of the martyrs ascended. At what particular portion of it, is not stated; perhaps toward the latter part, as they are told in reply "That they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." The period of the church's tribulation was not yet over. The cup of iniquity in the hands of her enemies was not yet full. But the hour of judgment and vengeance should come at length, in the final overthrow of all their enemies—the arresting of the dread work of persecution—the deliverance of the church from her long scene of trials, and the glorious establishment of Messiah's kingdom. These facts are not all stated here, but are implied in the termination of the season of persecution to the church, and the avenging judgments which should be meted out to her persecutors.

The "white robes" given to these saints are symbols of their public acceptance and justification, and thus their title to an everlasting inheritance.

The vision of this seal is eminently calculated to give support and encouragement to the people of God, under the

long reign of tribulation and sorrow through which the church is called to pass. Christ, himself, when on earth, gave his disciples distinctly to understand that such a season of great trial was before them, and warned them not to be deceived respecting it. He told them that a period of abounding iniquity, delusion, and error was to come—when they should be hated of all nations for his name's sake—when his cause should be assailed by all the powers of darkness, and Antichrist should be revealed in his terrible features. The period would seem to be long protracted, so that the martyr spirits would be ready, with united voice, to cry, "O Lord, how long?" When will the period of thy coming arrive—the hour of judgment to these our foes, and the vindication of thine own insulted cause? The answer is—"Yet for a little season," until all the glorious martyred company shall be collected in. The time must not be cut short, before they shall all be permitted to bear their testimony for Jesus, and win their everlasting crown. Besides this, the time is not longer than was first intended. It is God's appointed time, who knows the end from the beginning, and when it shall be best to vindicate the blood of his chosen ones upon their haughty oppressors.

Chap. 6: 12—17.—And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood: and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bond-man, and every free-man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

It will be noticed that the symbols are here changed entirely in their character from those that have gone before,

and drawn from a different source. We are taken out of the department of human life into the scenes of nature, which is very clear evidence that the history of the church is no longer under consideration; for had that been continued, the symbols would have been derived from the same quarter, so as to forbid our being led astray. We have no more warrior horsemen, or civil magistrates, nor any other living characters, but we behold the most terrific convulsions of nature; a mighty earthquake, the sun turned to blackness, the moon to blood, the stars falling, the heavens departing, and the mountains and islands moved out of their places. If, now, the history of the church is no longer under consideration, as is evident from the entire change of symbols, then we are directed with absolute certainty to the civil and political world, as the only remaining subject, for, of course, these convulsions of nature are not to be taken in a literal sense.

Herein, also, is the correspondence of excellence and dignity in the use of symbols accurately preserved. To describe the glorious agencies and history of the church, noble symbols from human life are chosen; while to represent the events of the political world, we are taken into an inferior department, where objects of nature are employed. This is what we might naturally expect, and gives simplicity and consistency to the whole.

What, then, are the events of civil history, which correspond to such mighty convulsions as are here described? Every one will at once perceive the analogy between an earthquake and political revolutions. As the earth is shaken and rent asunder by an earthquake, so a nation is convulsed and upheaved by political revolutions. Society is all in agitation, as when the solid earth trembles. The sun, moon and stars, also, bear the same relation to the earth, that rulers and princes do to the body politic; while the firmament of heaven is analogous to the civil fabric of govern-

would hardly come into such a category. In regard to the latter, one hardly knows whether to rejoice or lament over it. It was a dear bought victory to the church, when a Christian emperor was secured to the throne of the Cæsars. From that victory dates her saddest declension; and from thence went forth the pale horse and his dread rider, to spread havoc and death on every side.

Again, the events in the time of Constantine do not answer at all to the representations of the symbols. The imperial sun was not then turned to blackness, nor the moon to blood. The succession of emperors still continued, and Constantine certainly was as good as those who had gone before him, in fact, far better; while nothing occurred at that time which would answer to the passing away of the heavens. The government of the empire continued as before, with laws and institutions unchanged. The sun continued to shine; and the heavens remained as in time past; the only change being in the religion of the empire.

The argument, however, which settles this point, is, that the overthrow of Paganism, and the accession of Constantine to the empire, are hereafter described under very different and far more appropriate symbols; symbols which point us clearly to the religious events of those times. This history is found in the twelfth chapter, under the symbols of a woman in travail, whose child the dragon stood ready to devour, and the war of Michael and the devil. When we come to the interpretation of these, we shall perceive their appropriateness to represent religious and political events combined, as were those connected with the accession of Constantine; and how entirely different they are from those now under review. The full force of this argument cannot at present be appreciated by my hearers, but I will refer to the subject again, when we come to the exposition of the chapter referred to.

Where, then, shall we find the events intended to be de-

scribed under the sixth seal? They are those to which the martyred spirits of the preceding one looked forward, when they cried "O Lord, how long?" They describe that day of avenging judgment, which is in store for the persecutors of the church, and which will be the "great day" of wrath to God's enemies. A large portion of the Apocalypse is occupied with the history of these persecuting powers, civil and ecclesiastical. It is the dominancy of these that constitutes the period of tribulation to the church, when the witnesses of Jesus testify in sackcloth, and the cry of the martyred ones ascends from the altar. This is the time of abounding iniquity, when the love of many waxes cold—the time of wide prevailing apostacy and error, and unparalleled persecution—the time when these haughty ones in their wickedness ride upon the high places of the earth. But by and by the end will come, and it will be with a great earthquake, which shall demolish all these fabrics of iniquity, and shake proud oppressors from their places, as the fierce blast of the whirlwind strips the tree of its fruit in an untimely hour.

These powers of persecution were not overthrown in the time of Constantine. The cruelties of pagan Rome then ceased; but, instead thereof, came up another wild beast, which ravaged and devoured the church with still fiercer rage. Great Babylon arose, which was to become drunk with the blood of the saints. "The great day" of God's wrath, therefore, is when he shall deal in judgment with these proud, insulting foes, and remember all their wickedness. And a mighty earthquake it will be, which shall upheave their thrones and hierarchies from their deepest foundations.

The events here predicted will, doubtless, require a considerable period of time for their accomplishment, as we might naturally expect from their character. Some commentators suppose, and with great probability, that they

embrace the same series that is more minutely described under the seven last plagues, dating from the great French revolution of the last century, and continuing on until the overthrow of Babylon and the destruction of the beast. Under the sixth seal, these final judgments are not intended to be minutely described, but only brought to view in a general form. The fact, also, that so many symbols of the most striking characters are grouped together in one picture, would sustain the view just presented. We have a mighty earthquake, and then the most disastrous convulsions in the heavens,—the sun turned to blackness, the moon to blood, and the falling of the stars; and then the actual dissolution of the heavens themselves, with the sweeping away of mountains and islands. Here is an unusual combination of symbols; and we may suppose that a long series of judgments is here condensed into a brief space, to be hereafter more minutely detailed.

The darkening of the sun does not denote its extinction, but its being converted into an object of horror, as likewise the moon changed to blood; and may denote the fact more clearly described in another place, that in the terrible convulsions which shall upheave the nations in the end, the supreme powers in the state shall become as fearful scourges, and objects of as great horror to the people, as would be the sun made black as sackcloth of hair. In the continuance of these revolutions, the stars shall fall, or princes and nobles and potentates shall be hurled from their seats; and finally the heavens themselves shall pass away, or the political fabrics of the nations be swept from the earth, and thus an end be put to these persecuting powers which have so long oppressed the church of God. Then shall the long period of tribulation to the saints be over, and the way prepared for them to take the kingdom and possess it for ever.

It will now be seen that in these six seals we have a most vivid outline drawn of the history of the church, from her

incipient movements after the ascension of Christ, through her dark period of trial, until the final overthrow of all her mighty foes, and the establishment of the Redeemer's kingdom in its glory. It is a sketch drawn by a master hand, and developing a history which no wisdom of man would ever have foretold. Human foresight would never have anticipated such a series of events to the church of God. Any other history would sooner have been imagined than the one delineated with such graphic pen. For even now, with all the light of prophecy, and fact, and history, before their eyes, the world know not how to comprehend the true position and character of the church. They cannot read her history in the past ; much less then could they have foretold it in the future. It is, however, worthy of the profoundest study.

At the beginning, we have the church in its purity, going forth under the 'faithful ministers of Christ to execute his great commission, and win the peaceful triumphs of the cross. These are the white horsemen of the first seal. But ere long they undergo a sad change, and become usurpers and rulers in the house of God, grasping their great sword. Anon, they are seen upon their black horse, laying the church under the most tremendous spiritual taxation, robbing her of all the precious truths of the Gospel, and leaving her to desolating famine ; and finally these false, usurping rulers appear astride their pale horse, with hell following after, for their instruments of death, the sword, famine, pestilence, and the beasts of the earth, were now complete ; and fearfully did these ghastly horsemen ride. Now did the church testify in sackcloth, and long did the period of tribulation appear to the faithful witnesses of Jesus, so that their interceding cry went up, "O Lord, how long?" The answer was, yet a little season, and then shall come that mighty earthquake, that day of wrath, that shall dash in pieces like a potter's vessel these persecuting powers, and the long expected hour of Israel's deliverance come.

SERMON VIII.

Chap. 7 : 1-3.—And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God : and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And I heard the number of them which were sealed, and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel. Of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nephtalim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand.

A CLEAR understanding of the two visions in this chapter can be obtained only by considering the plan upon which the prophecies of the book are arranged, and with which these are in entire harmony. I was not able to obtain any satisfactory explanation of this chapter, until its meaning was brought to view in the light of the general plan alluded to. A part of this plan has already been stated, viz., that the events are narrated by series, a particular subject being taken up and its history carried through to the end, when the narrative returns again and takes up another. This, however, is not the whole of it. While the history of any particular apostasy or corruption is thus developed, we have in immediate connection and contrast a parallel history of God's true church extending through the same period. Thus the contemporaneous history of iniquity and righteousness, of apostasy and Christian perseverance, of a false and true church,

are presented in contrast together, showing that while iniquity and error have been triumphant, God has still had his own church, and faithful witnesses to testify for him, though it was in sackcloth. It would be difficult at this point of the work to present the evidences of this arrangement of the narrative. But it will be made very evident hereafter.

In view now of this regular plan of the prophecy, we are guided to an explanation of the chapter before us. The six seals just opened give us a most vivid portraiture of the rise of the great apostacies in the church, through the corruption of her ministry—how that church was turned into a most bitter persecutor—and finally the doom which, as an apostolic church, she received. In the contemplation of such a dark and distressing picture, the question would naturally be started in the minds of God's people, is this indeed the melancholy history of Christ's church? Does it turn out so badly as this, and come to such an end? This question now finds its answer in another parrallel history, put in contrast with that just given, which shows that there was a remnant preserved in the midst of corruption and apostacy, and that a great multitude were gathered even out of this drak period of the church's tribulation, whose robes were made white in the blood of the Lamb.

The two leading symbols of the vision before us are the tempestuous winds which are about to sweep over land and sea, and the sealing of God's servants. The first of these symbols is drawn from nature, and would lead us to look for some political events. "The four winds" are all the winds of heaven, blowing from every quarter; and "the four angels," stationed at the four corners of the earth, are all the agencies that have the control of these winds. The design of the winds was "to hurt the earth and the sea," as well as the trees—to spread devastation on every side; but for the present they were held in restraint and prevented from

blowing, to give opportunity for the sealing of God's servants.

What, then, is there in the political world corresponding to tempestuous winds sweeping over the earth, and prostrating everything in the fury of their march? What but combinations and masses of men driven on by fierce and excited passion, and ravaging all before them? Under the sounding of the seven trumpets, described in the next chapter, we find that just such masses of men were precipitated upon the Roman empire, and their devastating effects upon the earth, and the sea, and the trees, are particularly detailed. These were the northern barbarians, which became the scourge and destruction of the empire; their being now held in restraint indicating the fact that the time had not yet arrived for them to perform their appointed work. The angels spoken of were the leaders of these hordes. They were seen "standing on the four corners of the earth," whence the winds were to blow, for the time had not yet come for them to go forth on their mission.

Meanwhile John beheld "another angel, ascending from the East, having the seal of the living God." His coming from "the East," which was the cardinal point, and that of the sun's rising, denotes, perhaps, his conspicuous and benignant character; for omens from the East were regarded as favorable; while his "ascending" was more probably to attain an elevated position, from which his voice might be heard by the four angels standing at the corners of the earth, and, consequently, at a great distance. His command to them was to delay their appointed work of destruction until he should have sealed the servants of God in their foreheads. This sealing is not making them the children of God, but marking or designating them as such—distinguishing them from the followers of a corrupt, apostate church, who are afterwards described as having the mark of the beast. The

fact set forth is that during the progress of the church's corruption, even in the darkest times, God had his true and faithful worshippers, a chosen seed to serve him, the number of whom is stated to be one hundred and forty-four thousand, or twelve thousand from each tribe. Some have supposed that the conversion of the Jews was intended by this sealing of the twelve tribes—but this is taking the literal sense, and violating its nature as a symbol. The national tribes are taken from the proper department to represent the true Israel of God, or the Christian church; and all the tribes are mentioned, as well as the definite number of one hundred and forty-four thousand, to show that God preserved his own church complete, though antichrist reigned in power.

Chap. 7: 9-17.—After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

IN this scene, the vision is carried forward to the close of the period of tribulation and persecution to the church, when her enemies are finally overthrown; and here are the results, the glorious harvest gathered—a multitude whom no man can remember, gathered out of all nations, kindreds, people, and tongues, standing before the throne and the

Lamb, clothed in white robes, in token of their justification, and with palms in their hands, the symbols of victory. The scene is laid in heaven, and does not, therefore, represent any event transpiring on earth. We are also expressly informed by one of the elders who these are arrayed in white robes, and whence they came, so that there can be no question respecting them. This is the glorious company of redeemed ones, which "came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple. And he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat." What a contrast to the scenes from which they came, in the midst of famine, and cold, and nakedness, and peril, and sword, where they were killed all the day long! But their perils now are all over; "for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

This company of the redeemed is represented as joining in a united song of praise, in view of their being brought safely through their trials, and conducted home to glory. "Salvation," or, as it might be rendered, "The Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." Then all the angelic throng took up the chorus, "Saying Amen; Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen."

It is evident now that in this and the preceding chapters, we have two grand parallel and comprehensive histories; one, of the process of corruption in the church, and the development of spiritual despotism, with the judgments that finally overtook these cruel persecutors; the other the setting apart of God's chosen servants, and their separation from an

apostate church, with the final glorious triumph of all who endure unto the end, and reign with Christ in his kingdom. Many of the commentators place the scene of both the visions of the seventh chapter immediately after the accession of Constantine. But the period of tribulation to the church had not then ceased. *The great* persecuting power arose after that; she who was to become "drunk with the blood of the saints. Nor will this season of tribulation come to an end until the false prophet or Babylon and the beast are taken and cast into the burning lake,—ch. 19: 20,—an event that is still future. As the sixth seal describes the final overthrow of all these anti-Christian powers, so does this vision of the white-robed company bring before us the whole innumerable multitude, from every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, who have been preserved faithful through their trials, and shall receive at last the crown of everlasting life.

This last vision, therefore, is the same that is more fully described in the last two chapters of this book, under the symbol of the new Jerusalem; while the earthquake of the sixth seal is also more minutely detailed in chs. 15, 16, 18, and 19. The evidence of this parallelism in the plan of the prophecy will be made much more apparent in the end, and as we proceed.

Chap. 8: 1—5. And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets. And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.

THE seventh seal embraces the remainder of the volume, which strikes us at first as singular, being so much larger than the other six. It is, however, easily explained in the

fact that the first six are a synopsis of the whole book, containing a condensed view of the church apostate to its final overthrow, and then a parallel view of the true church to its final triumph in the new Jerusalem. The seventh seal now simply gives a more detailed account of the events embraced within the period of the six, developing more fully the history of the great persecuting powers, civil and ecclesiastical, the preservation of the church during this period, and its glorious and final triumph upon the utter ruin of all its foes. This seal embraces the seven trumpets and the seven vials, with the whole of what follows.

On its opening, "there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour." Of the meaning of this I can give no explanation, nor have I seen any solution that seems to meet the requirements of the symbol. Many understand it as symbolic of a short period of tranquillity and freedom from persecution enjoyed by the church previous to the sounding of the trumpets. But there are several serious objections against this interpretation. One is, that there were several such periods of tranquillity to the early church. Why then should one be singled out to be symbolized more than the others? Another is, that it is exceedingly questionable whether "silence," and especially silence among the inhabitants of heaven, is a proper symbol of the cessation of persecution. If so, would not voices then in heaven symbolize an opposite state of tribulation to the church? There is no proper analogy between the silence here described and a period of tranquillity on earth. Another objection is, that the "silence" is "in heaven," and not, therefore, symbolical of any event on earth. 'When earthly events are described, we have always had symbols taken from earth to represent them; but when we are carried up in vision to heaven, it is to show us things transpiring there. This, I think, will be found to be the invariable fact throughout the Apocalypse. Besides all this, "a half hour," according to prophetic

time, counting a day for a year, would be one week, a period of tranquillity too short certainly to be made any account of.

Other commentators make this silence to represent a season of awe and contemplation, during which the inhabitants of heaven dwell upon the amazing events about to be unfolded in the seventh seal. But we are not aware that this seal is more grand than those which preceded, or called thus for a special season of contemplation. We question also whether silence would be the appropriate symbol of such awe and meditation. We do not perceive the analogy.

Some other interpretations are given, but they are equally unsatisfactory. It might seem as if the explanation was to be found in connection with the fact stated respecting the opening of the three other seals—that voices followed them. On the opening of the first four, there was a voice from the four beasts, as the voice of thunder; on the opening of the fifth, the cry of the martyrs from the altar. But when the seventh was opened, there was silence in heaven. The contrast in the facts is noticeable, but what is intended by it, I am wholly at a loss to understand.

Before the angels sound their trumpets, we have a representation of the acceptance which the prayers of his people on earth find before God in heaven, which is by an angel offering much incense from a golden censer at the altar. The smoke of this incense with the prayers of saints ascended before God, thus showing their acceptableness, notwithstanding that he permitted apostacy and iniquity to continue, and his church to be persecuted still. Some suppose that the vision represents a time of unusual prayer in the church, in view of impending calamities. But the other idea, of the acceptableness of the prayers of the saints, seems more consonant with the symbols.

The same angel then having filled his censer with fire from the altar, “cast it” (not the censer, but the fire) upon the earth: a token of God’s avenging judgments; “and there

were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake." These, of course, were on earth, following the descent of the fire, and symbolized the convulsions and overturnings that were now to take place in the empire.

Chap. 8: 6-7. And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound. The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.

WE here enter upon a series of prophecies, developing the successive steps in the downfall of the Roman empire, that great persecuting power, which must be taken out of the way, in order to the revelation of "the man of sin." This was the power referred to by the apostle as the let or hindrance to the introduction of "That Wicked."

The overthrow, therefore, of pagan Rome was intimately connected with the great affairs of the church, and might well form a part of the grand panorama.

The question will naturally be asked, how do we know that the symbols of this and several of the following trumpets are to be applied to the civil history and calamities of the Roman empire?

There are several things that guide us in this matter. One is, that we can readily fix the interpretation of the fifth trumpet, as the curse of Mohammedanism in the Eastern empire. We therefore conclude that the first four precede that. The symbols also are all drawn from the natural world. Consequently, we look to political events for their fulfillment. They are likewise of most destructive character, and therefore we look for events of a disastrous nature. These are the general principles that guide us.

The symbol of the first trumpet is a fierce storm of hail and fire, mingled with blood, which, descending upon the

of civilization, under the impelling power of the fiercest passions. Civilized warfare is sufficiently terrible. But that would be a blessing, almost, compared to the incursions of these wild Goths. The following description by Gibbon will give some idea of the devastation, and ruin, and slaughter, which followed the track of this terrific storm of "fire and hail."

"The banks of the Rhine were crowned like those of the Tiber, with houses and well cultivated farms; and if a poet descended the river, he might express his doubts on which side was situated the territory of the Romans. This scene of peace and plenty was suddenly changed into a desert, and the prospect of the smoking ruins could alone distinguish the solitude of nature from the desolation of man. The flourishing city of Mentz was surprised and destroyed, and many thousand Christians inhumanly massacred in the church. Wurms perished after a long and obstinate siege. Strasburg, Spire, Rheims, Tournay, Arras, Amiens, experienced the cruel oppression of the German yoke, and the consuming flames of war spread from the banks of the Rhine over the greatest part of the seventeen provinces of Gaul. That rich and extensive country, as far as the ocean, the Alps and the Pyrenees, was delivered to the barbarians, who drove before them, in a promiscuous crowd, the bishop, the senator and the virgin, laden with the spoils of their houses and their altars."

Another historian describing the same, some years after the event, says: "The barbarians meeting with little resistance, indulged in the utmost cruelty. The cities which they captured, they so utterly destroyed, that no traces of them now remain, especially in Thrace and Greece, except here and there a tower or a gate. All the men who opposed them they slew, young and old, and indeed spared not women, nor even children. Whence there is still but a sparse population in Italy. The plunder which they seized

in every part of Europe was immense, and especially at Rome, where they left nothing, either public or private." In this latter description, reference is had, likewise, to subsequent invasions of the northern tribes. But they were all of the same devastating character; and the statements show how all the green grass, or the feeblest portion of society, the aged, the young and the female sex were consumed before the raging storm, with a third part of the trees, or the active and the strong, who can make resistance as trees can better defy a tempest.

It is a fact to be observed, that these Gothic tribes established no independent government in the region which they overrun and conquered. They were, in part, wasted by slaughter and pestilence—in part they mingled themselves with the surviving population of the empire, and in part retreated again to the north, from whence they came. The devastating effects of their incursions remained, but they themselves, like fire and hail, disappeared, and were not found in any organized body or institutions within the empire.

Chap. 8: 8, 9.—And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea; and the third part of the sea became blood; and the third part of the creatures which were in the sea and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.

THIS symbol is drawn from the natural world, and is one of fearfully destructive character—a volcanic mountain torn from its place, and cast into the midst of the sea, thence sending forth its streams of molten lava in every direction, which carry destruction wherever they roll. This destruction was so wide-spread, that a third part of the sea became blood, and a third part of the fishes and ships were destroyed. Such a mountain would naturally remain where it was thus

cast, and continue from time to time to send forth its terrible irruptions, to the destruction of all within its reach.

This symbol finds its accurate fulfillment in the Vandals under Genseric, who, driven out from their native seats by the Huns, passed through France and Spain into Africa, conquered the Carthaginian territory, and there established a permanent independent government. From this as a fixed position, they for a long period made incursions upon the neighboring islands and territories, firing the cities, plundering and slaughtering the inhabitants, and intercepting the commerce of the Mediterranean. With an army of three thousand Vandals and Moors from Africa, Genseric landed at the mouth of the Tiber, entered the city of Rome itself, and for fifteen days gave it up to the plunder of his fierce barbarians. When their rage and passions were glutted, he led them back to Africa, loaded with the spoils of the imperial city, and a multitude of captives, among whom was the Empress Eudoxia and her two daughters. By this desolating incursion the Western empire was left in a weak and desperate condition, even tottering to its fall. By "the sea" into which this mountain was cast, is intended not literally the Mediterranean or any other sea, but the heart of the empire, and that, perhaps, in a state of tumult and agitation, as it now was from the invasions of the barbarians. "There were voices, and thunderings and lightnings, and an earthquake." When the Gothic invasions commenced, the Roman empire was in a state of comparative tranquillity, and therefore the storm of hail and fire is represented as falling upon "*the earth.*" But the empire was now becoming agitated and the burning mountain was cast into "*the sea.*" The conversion of the waters to blood denotes, doubtless, the destruction of life which took place in the empire, and "the third part," the extent to which such destruction was spread. What is intended exactly by "the third part of the creatures which were in the sea," and "the third part of the ships," I am

not able to say. By analogy we should be led to refer the former to the rulers and dignitaries in the empire, as they sustain a similar relation to the people that fishes do to the waters ; and the ships may symbolize cities or public monuments and structures. I speak not, however, with confidence on this point, though the following testimony from the historian Procopius might go far to sustain such interpretation as regards the facts. "Genseric having strengthened himself by Moorish auxiliaries, as often as spring returned, harassed now Sicily, now Italy, by marauding invasions ; reducing some cities to servitude, demolishing others, and exhausting all by plunder and exactions, until, induced by their devastations and poverty to sail away, he turned to the Eastern empire and invaded Illyria, Peloponnesia and the adjacent islands, and returning again, entered Italy and Sicily, and gleaned whatever plunder he had before left."

SERMON IX.

Chap. 8 : 10-11.—And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters : and the name of the star is called Wormwood ; and the third part of the waters became wormwood, and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.

THE description given of this “star” shows that it was a large burning meteor, such as we sometimes see shooting athwart the heavens, and not one of the fixed stars or planets. It fell to the earth as such meteors often do, and its effects were felt upon the rivers and fountains of waters, which bear an analogous relation to the sea, that bordering tribes and nations do to an empire.

Some commentators have applied this symbol to the Arian or Pelagian heresy. Making this “great star” falling from heaven to represent one or both of the men who gave names to the above sects, departing from the true faith, and by their teachings corrupting the fountains and streams of truth, and so embittering them as to cause the spiritual death of many. The interpretation has much plausibility, and we might adopt it, were we not made sure, from the character of the symbols, and the department of the natural world from which they are drawn, that the spiritual history of the church is not now under consideration. The symbols indicate that we must still look to the political history of the empire for their fulfillment. We have a destructive agent presented to us, but not one like the burning mountain, and the storm of hail and fire destroying by their direct agency. The action of the meteor was upon the waters, imparting to them a poisonous quality, which caused death to those who drank ;

and falling upon the head waters of the streams, as it appeared to do, its poison would be carried to far distant points.

We find the points of this symbol fulfilled in Attila and his terrible Scythians or Huns, who came from the remote solitudes of Asia, and were more barbarous and cruel than the Goths or the Vandals. Attila, their king and commander, was distinguished for the ferocity of his character, and claimed for himself the designation or title of "The Scourge of God." This fierce warrior, with his wild hordes, fell with desolating fury, first upon the Eastern empire, sweeping it with fire and sword. About ten years afterwards he invaded the province of Gaul, where he was met by the combined forces of the Visigoths, Alans, Franks, and Romans, and defeated, with the loss of one hundred and seventy thousand men. The slaughter was so vast, that a rivulet flowing through the battle field is said to have been colored and swollen with the blood of the slain. Yet, in the following year, he invaded Italy, with a still larger army than that with which he had entered Gaul, and carried desolation through the region of the Alps, though he did not venture toward Rome itself. A year or two afterward he suffered another terrible overthrow from the Alans and Visigoths in Gaul, and subsequently retreated to his own country, where he died.

From the above facts it will be seen that the invasions of Attila and his Huns were chiefly upon the borders of the empire, and the mountainous regions of the Alps, where the great streams which flow into the Mediterranean and the Black Seas, take their rise. In these regions the barbarian warrior was met by the combined forces of the various Gothic tribes, which had already possessed themselves of the country, and the Roman army. Rome was then under the necessity of allying with herself, and calling to her aid these half-civilized barbarians against a more dreaded foe,

with whom, in her declining strength, she was not now able to cope single-handed. The success, too, which attended these sanguinary conflicts on the part of the combined forces, was the means of giving greater political importance to the Gothic tribes, and securing their independence. As they rose also, Rome fell. These were the rivers and fountains of water which were embittered by the Wormwood Meteor, and poured their poisoned waters into the heart of the Roman empire. Their warlike youth, who had triumphantly withstood the Scythian warrior, enlisted in great numbers in the Roman armies, and became a scourge to the nation, preparing the way for its downfall. They were like poisoned waters diffused through the whole system, and paralysing its vital powers.

Chap 8 : 12.—And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.

THE symbol of this trumpet is an eclipse of the third part of the sun, moon, and stars, so that these luminaries of heaven shone not for a third part of the day and night. Under the sixth seal, we showed that these heavenly bodies are taken as symbols of civil rulers, the latter being to the body politic what the former are to the earth. In the darkening, then, of the sun, moon, and stars, we may look for some disastrous change or overthrow in the imperial government, which event we find in the downfall of the Western Roman empire, toward the close of the fifth century. After the sacking of Rome by Genseric and his Vandals, as described under the second trumpet, the empire in the West struggled for an existence for a period of twenty years, when Momylus, the last of the Roman line of emperors, was defeated by Odoacer, king of the Heruli, who caused himself to be pro-

claimed king of Italy, A. D. 476. Thus was the Roman sun eclipsed in darkness. Odoacer continued in possession of the kingdom for sixteen years, when he was defeated and slain by Theodoric, and by him the kingdom of the Ostrogoths was established in Italy, which lasted for sixty years. This, in turn, was overthrown by the Eastern emperor, to whom it became a tributary province. He abolished the ancient senate, with all the former magistrates, appointing in each city of Italy a governor, with the title of Duke, in subordination to another with the title of Exarch, whose residence was at Ravenna. Thus, at last, was Rome, once the proud mistress of the world, reduced to a poor dukedom, made tributary to the Exarch of Ravenna, and he holding his authority at the will of the Emperor of Constantinople, the seat of the Eastern empire.

Thus are developed in these four trumpets the successive steps by which was accomplished the subversion of the Western empire, that mighty power which had so long ruled the world, and cruelly persecuted the church of God, and which was necessary to be taken out of the way, in order to the development of the scenes of the drama yet to follow. "The man of sin" must be revealed, before God's great designs were all accomplished; and ere this perfection of ecclesiastical despotism could be unfolded, imperial Rome must be removed out of the way.

We may observe, also, from this prophetic history, how perfectly all these events among the nations, and the most disastrous events, too, are comprehended in the plan of Divine Providence, and constitute a part of his great arrangements. The inhabitants of the civilized world looked with horror and dismay upon these overwhelming hordes of barbarians, as they rushed from their forest fastnesses in the North; and as the noble monuments and institutions of civilization were swept away before this storm of hail and fire, and the fiery streams of lava from the burning mountain, even

Christian faith might have been staggered for awhile, and the painful thought have forced itself upon the mind, all is going to destruction, the hopes of the world are being for ever blighted; as Christians sometimes reason now, and say, that if our government proves a failure, and comes to a disastrous issue, all is lost. No, my brethren, God's ways are far above, out of our sight; nor did these most disastrous invasions from the North upon the abodes of civilization come in to defeat and disappoint his great plans, but to fulfill them.

We may pause here, also, for a moment, to mark the beauty and consistency of the principle of interpretation which we have endeavored to follow. The commentators are, to a great extent, agreed in referring the four trumpets to the downfall of the Western empire by the Northern tribes, though they differ somewhat in making the particular application of each one. The events predicted are all political; the symbols employed to represent them are uniformly objects from nature. May we not then be confirmed strongly in the conclusion that the horsemen of the first four seals, taken from the department of civil life, are not used to describe similar political events, but, on the contrary, those of a religious nature in the church. This would give order and consistency to symbolic language, as following the law of analogy. But if there be no such order, and symbols are drawn indiscriminately from every quarter without any principle to regulate them, what but the utmost confusion must be introduced into the whole book?

Chap. 8: 13.—And I beheld and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Wo, wo, wo, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound.

THE more recent revised editions of the Greek Testament, give the word *eagle* instead of "angel"—the idea, probably, is an angel, or messenger, flying with the swiftness or wings

THE symbols of this vision are of a somewhat peculiar character, and peculiarly combined. They are not drawn wholly from the natural world, showing that we are not to look merely to political events in the empire for their fulfillment; neither are they drawn from human life, in any such way as to indicate religious events in the church. The leading characters of the vision are living, active agents, and those of a destructive character, so as to make them a curse and wo. The first object presented to us is "a star," which had fallen to the earth—our translation conveys the idea of its being in the act of falling, but in the original, it is described as already fallen; its dejection from heaven to earth being complete. A star may be a symbol of a civil ruler or a religious teacher. It is used for both; the other symbols in connection, indicating which is intended in any particular instance, and whether it was set in the political or ecclesiastical firmament. This fallen star is an appropriate symbol of Mohammed, the author and propagator of an apostate faith. He was not such a star as was set in the firmament of the Christian church, and as He holds in His hand who walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks—but he was a *fallen* star, thus indicating that he was the teacher of a false faith.

Several of the commentators refer this "star" to the apostate Nestorian monk Sergius, from whom Mohammed received, to a great extent, his knowledge of the Jewish and Christian system. The ground of this reference is, that they suppose that this star was once set in the Christian church, and fell thence, which cannot be applied to Mohammed. But this fact is not stated, or necessarily implied in the text. It is described only as a fallen star. The only place where it was ever seen or known, was on the earth. We are not, therefore, under the necessity of looking for one, who had once been a teacher in the church, and afterwards became an apostate. It would seem, likewise, that in describing such a curse as Mohammedanism, it were very inconsistent

to leave out entirely the great originator of the delusion, and bring into view such a subordinate instrument as Sergius.

To this star was given a key, with which he opened the bottomless pit or abyss, whence issued a dense smoke which darkened the whole heavens. In the Gospel the figure is employed of the keys of the kingdom of heaven, which are put by Christ into the hands of his ministers, showing that they act by his authority and in his name, so that whatever they bind or loose on earth, shall be bound or loosed in heaven. The key, therefore, delivered to this teacher of an apostate faith, is an exceedingly appropriate symbol. It was, however, "the key of the bottomless pit," and not of the kingdom of heaven. With this key that pit was opened, and thence issued a dense smoke, as "the smoke of a great furnace." What more striking symbol could we have of such a false religion as Mohammedanism, than that of a black smoke darkening the sun and air, issuing from its true source, the bottomless pit? While a fallen star, ready to open it with a key, is a fit representative of the impostor himself. Perhaps in this symbol of the "bottomless pit," there may be reference to the circumstance in Mahomet's history of his retiring to the cave in Hera, where he claimed to receive his revelation from heaven. This is his account of the matter. The Word of God, however, stations him more appropriately *at the bottomless pit*, and tells us that his system originated thence. It was in the year 606 that Mahomet retired to this cave, and there prepared his system, though it was not until six years afterwards that he began publicly to proclaim his new doctrine, and gain converts beyond the circle of his own family.

The next object in the vision is the "locusts," which came out of the smoke, to whom was given the power of scorpions, or the power of inflicting a deadly sting like the scorpion. To what living agents, then, did the delusion of Mohammedanism give birth, like unto scorpion locusts?

Evidently the Saracens, or the warrior followers of Moham-med, who flocked to his standard, and espoused his cause. To these locusts it was commanded "that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads." This command is worthy of especial attention. Many of the commentators refer it, and think that they find its remarkable fulfillment in the order given by the Saracen commanders to their soldiers, "Destroy no palm trees, nor burn any fields of corn; cut down no fruit trees, nor do any mischief to cattle, only such as you kill to eat." This, however, is giving a literal and not a symbolic meaning; and if this is thus to be understood, we ought to have had the literal Saracens and not scorpion locusts to complete the picture. By grass and trees, as we have shown under a preceding trumpet, is to be understood the inhabitants of the country, the former representing the feebler portion of society, the latter the strong men. The fact, then, that these locusts were not to hurt the grass or trees or any green thing, is evidence that they were not sent as a scourge upon the political empire merely, as was the storm of hail and fire under the first trumpet. Had they been sent upon the earth to destroy as natural locusts do, eating every green thing, we should then have been certain that they were designed as symbols of a political scourge alone, having nothing to do with a system of religious delusion. But these scorpion locusts were forbidden to do what natural locusts always do, eat grass and trees; and, on the contrary, commissioned to do what natural locusts never do—"hurt men"—those who had not the seal of God in their foreheads, or those who belonged to an apostate church, and were no longer known as the true worshippers of Christ. This fact now shows us clearly, that some fatal religious imposture was designed to be set forth, as the "men" who were the object of attack by scorpion locusts, are found in that department which, by analogy, represents religious events.

The designation of the men hurt by the locusts as those who "had not the seal of God in their foreheads," points us to the wide-spread apostacy and corruption of the church at this period. It was the period when he of the pale horse was coursing with free rein over the earth, and killing with sword, famine, pestilence, and wild beasts. The churches both in the Western and Eastern empire were in the most deplorable condition, being corrupted with the grossest ignorance and idolatry; the virgin Mary, the saints, and miserable relics of every description being worshipped in the place of Jehovah, and superstition reigning with sovereign power over all minds. The Saracens thus came in as a scourge upon the apostate church of the East, overspreading those very regions and countries where the Gospel was first planted; and its mission was to hurt and torment those who had apostatized from the faith.

Concerning the injury they were to inflict, it is more particularly stated, "And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months; and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion when he striketh a man. And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them."

The Saracens, as here described under the symbol of the scorpion locusts, sustained a two-fold relation; and it is worthy of observation to notice the skill with which the symbols are selected and combined to set it forth. In the first place, the Saracens were warriors, and constituted a political body. As such, the natural locusts would fitly represent them. But they were likewise a religious body, and the fanatical propagators of a false faith. How, then, could this fact be combined symbolically with the other? It is by the locusts being forbidden to act out their own nature in eating grass and trees, and in being commanded to torment men, the field of their operations being changed from the department of

nature to that of civil life. Thus is the politico-religious system of the Saracens most accurately portrayed; and herein, also, is there well nigh a demonstration of the truth of this great principle respecting the interpretation of symbolic language.

It was given to them that they should "not kill" men, but torment them five months. What are we to understand by the symbol of killing men? Not literal slaughter or death, but analogous destruction, which would be that of the political or ecclesiastical organization of their enemies. The Saracen power, as already stated, was a politico-religious body, its fanatic warriors carrying the sword in one hand, and the Koran in the other. They might, therefore, kill politically or religiously—destroy the empire or the church. But they did neither, for it was not given them to "kill." They made extensive conquests, and gained numbers of converts. But they did not overthrow the Eastern empire, although they repeatedly attacked and besieged Constantinople, suffering, however, uniform defeat in the attempt. Neither did they destroy the church, corrupt and apostate as it was. To idolators and infidels they put the alternative of the Koran or death; but allowed the Christians to retain their church organizations, laying them, however, under severe contributions, and treating them to the ignominious appellation of Christian dogs. The Armenian and Greek churches exist in that portion of the world to this day, but they have, indeed, been grievously "tormented." The proud Moslem, glorying in his prophet and religion, has heaped every possible insult and injury upon the Christians, whom he suffered to live, but live only for him to torment. The torment was emphatically "as the torment of a scorpion when he striketh a man." Under these oppressions and indignities men would seek death, and not find it; they would desire to die, and death should flee from them. They might wish the extinction of their church and name, the very

destruction of their body, in order to escape the haughty indignity and exactions of their oppressors ; but such death could not come to their relief. They still continued as a people, and the foot of the Saracen trode upon the neck of the Christian dog.

Some expositors suppose that the " five months " are specified merely as marking the time during which locusts ordinarily continue their ravages. Others with more reason apply it as symbolic of the period during which the Saracens acted the part of locusts. Taking the day as the symbol of a year, being analogous, not the same periods of time, five months, of thirty days each, would be one hundred and fifty years. It was in A. D. 612 that Mohammed began publicly to propagate his imposture and gather adherents to his standard. From this point the locusts commenced, though the smoke was let out from the pit previously ; and from that time for one hundred and fifty years the Saracens continued their locust-like incursions and ravages, until A. D. 762, when they built Bagdad, which became their future seat of empire ; and henceforth they became a settled nation, making no further conquests. In fact, from that date the Saracen power began to decline. During this period of one hundred and fifty years, however, like swarms of devouring locusts, they ravaged in every direction, and nothing was able to withstand the terror of their onset. They overran Arabia, Palestine, Persia, Egypt, and the northern shores of Africa, from which they passed to the conquest of Portugal and Spain. These were the countries where the church had suffered the greatest corruption, and they were especially to be found " who had not the seal of God in their forehead." Europe too was now trembling for her fate, and filled with deepest apprehensions, threatened as she was by this dreaded Saracen power. In the very zenith of their conquests and glory, and confident of victory, they passed from Spain into France, with an army of four hundred thousand men, be-

sides women and children who came with them, with the intention of settling in that country, and extirpating Christianity. But here they exceeded their mission. Here was a region in which were found some who had the seal of God in their foreheads. Savoy, Piedmont, and the southern provinces of France, which were afterwards the seats of the Waldenses and Albigenses. Upon this territory the invading host was met by Charles Martel, grandfather to Charlemagne, and one of the bloodiest battles fought that is to be found upon the records of history. The Saracens, who scarcely ever knew defeat before, left 375,000 of their number slain upon the field, together with their general. This terrible battle put a stop to the progress of the Saracen arms in Europe, and saved it from subjection to the Mohammedan faith.

The next point in the vision is a more particular description of the locusts. Several of the points named answer in a remarkable manner to the personal appearance of the Saracens; and many of the commentators thus apply the symbols to them. As, for instance, the shape of the locusts like horses prepared to battle, is taken to represent the Saracen cavalry, with which their armies were chiefly composed. Their crowns like gold upon their heads—the Turkish turban. Their faces of men and hair of women, that they wore mustachios and long beards, which gave them the fierce faces of the former, and long hair like the latter. Yet although these points answer so well to the description, this is probably not the intended meaning, and for two reasons. One is that it is applying the symbols literally, and thus destroying their symbolic character. The other is, that if we apply a part in this way, we must, to be consistent, apply the whole. The preceding interpretation will do very well with the crowns, and faces of men, and hair of women; but what shall we do with the teeth of lions, and tails of scorpions and stings in them? The description must fail here.

These symbols find a more consistent fulfillment as designating Saracen character, rather than mere personal appearance. Their shapes like war horses denoting their warlike disposition. Their crowns like gold, their wonderful success and triumphs. Their faces of men and hair of women, their boldness and cunning on the one hand, and their effeminate-ness on the other. Their teeth of lions, their strength and ferocity. Their breastplates of iron, either their invincibility, or their insensibility to miseries inflicted. The sound of their wings like chariots of many horses, their multitude and rapid conquests; while their scorpion tails with stings is an apt symbol of them as propagators of the Mohammedan imposture. The description thus sets them forth in their two-fold character of invincible warriors, and the fanatical adherents of a false religion, whose sting was like the torment of a scorpion, which they were empowered to exercise in hurting men five months, or one hundred and fifty years, as explained.

One fact more is stated respecting the locusts. "They had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon." The Saracens had their Caliphs, the successors of Mohammed, who united in themselves the supreme civil, military, and ecclesiastical powers. They were the High Priests of their religion, the commanders of their armies, and the emperors of the nation. Thus these locusts had a king over them, by which is intended a succession of supreme rulers, well described as an *angel of the bottomless pit*, whence originated the smoke or the imposture itself. Mahomet was the fallen star, who opened the pit to give vent to the smoke: his successors, who grasped his power, and propagated his delusion, were fit angels from the same abyss, their name Abaddon or Apollyon—both meaning Destroyer.

Thus is this strange and wonderful combination of symbols carried out with the most surprising accuracy; and we may

well pause to put the inquiry, how any mere human ingenuity would have contrived such a seemingly unnatural group of symbols, and imagined that they could ever find a fulfillment in history? What but the pen of inspiration, writing the future as if it were the past, could have described that fallen star, with the key of the pit—the issuing smoke—the locusts with scorpion tails from the smoke, whose mission was not to eat grass but torment men, and that for five months—such locusts, too, with heads of war horses—crowns of gold—faeces of men—hair of women—teeth of lions—breastplates of iron—the sound of their wings like the rush of chariots of many horses—their tails like scorpions, and a king over them, whose name was Destroyer? And where in the wide compass of universal history can you find another series of events which meet the strange facts of this symbolic vision, beside the one pointed out, and which answers so fully to the description?

SERMON X.

Chap. 9: 12. One wo is past: and behold, there come two more woes hereafter

In the discourse of the last Sabbath we had a description of Mahomet, his imposture, and Saracen followers, under the symbols of a fallen star, a smoke from the bottomless pit, and scorpion locusts from the smoke, sent to torment men five months. At the conclusion of this vision is the announcement that "one wo is past," and that two more are yet to come. The Saracen scourge was therefore the first of the three woes to come, proclaimed by the angel flying through mid-heaven, as described in the last verse of the preceding chapter; and terminated the close of the one hundred and fifty years during which they extended their ravages. The announcement of these woes, as they successively end, serves an important purpose in fixing the chronology of the events described. It proves clearly that they severally succeed each other in the order of time.

Chap. 9: 13-21. And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them. And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breast-plates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire, and smoke, and brimstone. By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths. For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt. And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not

worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

The voice from the altar which was heard upon the sounding of this trumpet, is probably intended to denote that the very altar, where incense and prayers were offered to God, was now crying out for judgment against an apostate church. That church, instead of paying their devotions to him, to whom they alone belonged, were offering them to the virgin, the saints, and thousand idols in the form of relics. In view of these abominable idolatries, a voice from the four horns of the altar (from all the horns) was heard, calling for the avenging judgments of heaven, which were the loosing of the four angels now bound in the river Euphrates. The symbols of this vision are of a mingled character and drawn from different departments. They are evidently also of a destructive character. There are first, four angels bound in the Euphrates—then an innumerable army of horsemen, commissioned to slay the third part of men—then horses breathing fire, smoke, and brimstone, and power in their tails to hurt. The horses thus described, being objects from nature, would point us to some political or military power. The horsemen taken from human life would designate a religious body; while the four angels would describe the distinguished heads or leaders that had the control of these agencies. We are pointed, therefore, to some political and religious, or fanatical military power, which should invade and overthrow the empire, the last fact being set forth in their slaying the third part of men.

With these guiding landmarks we can have no difficulty in identifying the Turkish or Ottoman power as the one intended, and its agreement with the symbolic vision will be apparent from the statement of a few facts of history.

The Turks were of Tartar or Scythian origin, from the northern regions of Asia, whence also the Huns hived upon

bound, that they might perform their appointed work, "to slay the third part of men," being "prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year." The Saracens, or the locusts of the fifth trumpet, were commissioned "not to kill men," but "hurt" them five months. By killing men, we showed, was intended the overthrow of the empire as a political body, or the church as a religious one. The Saracens were not to do either. Their work was to "torment." But the four angels when loosed were prepared "to slay the third part of men;" and in this we have set forth the subjugation of the Eastern empire and church, as we had the downfall of the Western empire in the darkening of the third part of the sun, moon, and stars, under the fourth trumpet.

The Turks obtained their first victory over the Christians of the Eastern, or Greek empire, in A. D., 1281. Immediately after this, the four Sultanies named above, were combined into one consolidated empire, under Othman, one of the four Sultans, and from him it took the name which it still retains, the Ottoman power. From the time of their being loosed, the Turks continued their aggressions, until in one hundred and seventy-two years from their first invasion, Constantinople fell before their victorious arms. The Eastern empire sunk to rise no more. The Turkish sword and the religion of the Koran were enthroned in the Christian metropolis of the Roman emperors; and the proud Moslem had the Christian dog completely under his foot. The Ottoman power, however, still continued to grow, and obtain new conquests, until the year 1672, when the last addition was made to their empire by a victory over the Poles; forty-eight towns and villages being ceded to the Sultan upon the treaty of peace. Prince Cantemir, one of their own historians says—"This was the last victory by which any advantage accrued to the Othman State, or any city or province was annexed to the ancient bounds of the empire." Agreeably to this, the same historian entitles the first part of his history, up to the

from human life—clearly point us to the two great elements in the Ottoman power—the political and the religious. The character now of this military power, inspired with the intense spirit of religious fanaticism, is described as almost precisely identical. The horsemen had “breast-plates of fire and of jacinth,” (or hyacinthine, or purplish, or reddish blue,) “and brimstone.” These represented the characteristics of the Turkish religion, or of the Turks as religious fanatics. Out of the horses’ mouths—the horses representing the Moslems as a military or political power—went “fire, and smoke, and brimstone”—the same as the breast-plates, except that the smoke is substituted for jacinth, which agree very nearly in color. We are thus brought to the conclusion, that we have in this vision an agency symbolized, in which ecclesiastical and political power were united in the closest manner possible; like horse and rider; and both animated by the same identical spirit. What the spirit precisely is, that is symbolized by fire, smoke, or jacinth, and brimstone, I am not able to say—perhaps that of a fierce, fanatical, intolerant, aggressive character.

The tails of the horses were serpents, having heads, with which they hurt; their power being in their mouth, and in their tails—the one a lion, the other a serpent. By the fire, and smoke, and brimstone, from their mouths, they killed “the third part of men,” obtained their conquests, and established their empire. Then, with their serpent tails did they torment all who would not adopt the Moslem faith, being in this respect like the scorpion locusts. The lion heads of these horses thus indicate the invincible strength and courage of the Moslem hosts, and their serpent tails the tormenting sting which they inflicted upon those whom they subdued, but who would not adopt their religion.

By “the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues,” is doubtless intended the western or Latin church, which saw the judgment of these Euphratean horsemen upon

the eastern empire, and the triumph of the Moslem faith and sword. The Latin church was not affected by this sixth trumpet. It fell as a wo upon the eastern church. These men were "Killed by these plagues." "The rest of the men" not killed, must then refer to the western church. The fact stated is, that they were not led to repentance and renunciation of their idolatries by the plagues which they had thus seen visited upon others. They still continued to "worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood;" by which are intended the idolatries of the Romish church in the worship of the Virgin Mary, and the saints, and relics. Error, and corruption, and apostasy, and ecclesiastical usurpation still prevailed as before. There was no repentance, no reformation.

One other point is deserving of consideration before we dismiss this vision, which is the duration of the Ottoman power. This is determined by what is said of the woes. The Saracens were the first wo, which terminated with the "five months," or the one hundred and fifty years, during which they were to torment men. The second wo commenced with the loosing of the four angels, or the beginning of the Ottoman conquests. An hour, a day, a month and a year, or three hundred and ninety-one years and fifteen days mark the continuance of those conquests, until A. D. 1672: but the wo itself, or the Ottoman power, is not represented as ending until after the death of the witnesses, and the fall of the tenth part of the city, when it is announced, "The second wo is past; and behold the third woe cometh quickly. Ch. 11: 14. The Turkish power has made no advance for four or five centuries, and for a considerable period past has actually been declining. But it is to endure for its allotted time.

Thus, under these six trumpets, we have developed the mighty agencies which God prepared for the overthrow of the western and the eastern empire, the latter being subdued

by the Moslem sword, and subjected to the Mohammedan faith. In contrast with these, and partly parallel with them, we have, in the following chapter, a portion of the true church's history, to show that all was not corrupted and lost—that though the eastern church was tormented by the serpent tails of the horses, and the western repented not of its sorceries and fornications, yet that Christ still preserved his sacred cause. •

Chap. 10.—And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud : and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire : and he had in his hand a little book open : and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth, and cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth : and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices. And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write : and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not. And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth, lifted up his hand to heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer : but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets. And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go, and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth. And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up ; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey. And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up ; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey : and as soon as I had eaten it my belly was bitter. And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many people, and nations, and tongues, and kings.

A GREAT variety of widely different interpretations have been given to this vision. Some begin with the mistake of making this mighty angel from heaven to represent Jesus Christ. But his being clothed with a cloud, a rainbow on his head, having his face as the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire, do not at all determine him to be the Son of God. A created angel is not employed as a symbol of Christ. When he appears, he does it proclaiming his own name and glorious attributes, so as to leave us in no doubt whatever.

He declares himself "The first and the last," who was dead, but is alive forevermore." Or he hath his name written, "King of kings, and Lord of lords."

This mighty angel, then, is the symbol of some human agencies of extraordinary, conspicuous character, as well as beneficent; for it stands in striking contrast to the destructive powers which have just been described under the six trumpets. Neither is the fulfillment of this vision to be found in the political events of the empire. The symbol is not drawn from the natural world, but the heavenly, though the scene is laid upon earth. We must then look to the church to find some conspicuous, remarkable agents, appearing for the defence of Christ and the truth. The cloud, and rainbow, and face of sun, and feet as pillars of fire, are designed, doubtless, to set forth the conspicuous and benignant character of these agencies, and that the angel was not such as they who were held bound in the river Euphrates. This one had the bow of covenant promise around his head, and his face gave light as the sun.

Where, then upon the arena of the church, do we find such conspicuous beneficent agents as are here set forth in this symbol? We find them in the great reformers of the sixteenth century, the angel described denoting not a single individual, but a body or succession of such men, as a wild beast denotes a succession of tyrannical rulers.

The angel set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth. This may denote that the lion-like voice which he uttered, should be heard afar over land and sea; or, that the reformers and their successors were to take possession of the sea, also, as well as the earth, crossing the waters, and carrying their cause to distant islands and nations. The latter, perhaps, is the more probable. The angel stood with his *right* foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth, or in the position of one advancing. So we find that the influence of the reformers was not limited to the earth, or

the Roman empire, which was the Apocalyptic earth, but reached far beyond it. It reached to these western shores, and planted the gospel here by the Pilgrim Fathers of New England, who were the exiles of Old England.

From description we know what the terrific roar of the lion is, as in the dead hour of night, he wakes the stillness of the forest, and makes every wild beast flee with trembling to his lair. There is no sound of the forest so loud and appalling as this. With such a lion like roar did Luther and his compeers break the dead silence of the Romish church, and make every unclean bird in that cage, and every beast in that foul covert tremble and fear. Never was there any body of men on earth whose voices were lifted up so high, and rang with such terror through the nations.

“And when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices.” Some suppose that these seven thunders were part of the apocalypse, as were the seven trumpets, and the seven vials. In fact some think that they were the seven vials, for the present sealed up, but afterwards made known in the days of the voice of the seventh angel. But I cannot think that they were any part of the revelation. John indeed evidently thought so at first, and under this impression he was proceeding to write them. But he is at once undeceived respecting the matter, and told to seal them up, yea, still farther, not to record them. To seal them up is equivalent to not revealing them. They were therefore neither made known nor written. Of course they were not part of this revelation. They were, however, something which had the appearance of a revelation; something which seemed to be clothed with divine authority, but which was not so, and must not be delivered to the church as such. What then were they? The most probable supposition is that they were the thunder voices of papal Rome—the anathema of the Pope as the vicar of Jesus Christ, issued against the reformers, and in answer to their lion-like voice. They were

uttered as the voice of God to his church. But the imperative command of heaven was, "Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not." They are no part of God's purposes, nor the expression of his will, though the thunders be *seven*.

The angel then "lifted up his hand to heaven, and sware by him that liveth forever and ever. . . . That there should be time no longer," or rather, that the time shall not be yet; the appointed time is not yet come, "but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets." The meaning is, that the time is not yet come for the finishing of the mystery of God, but it shall come in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound. The seventh angel is the angel with the seventh trumpet, and when he sounds, there is the shout of many voices saying, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever." ch. 11: 18. By "the mystery of God" is meant the continuance of the great apostacies for the twelve hundred and sixty days, the supremacy of the wild beast and the great whore over the western church, and Mohammedanism over the eastern. It is the continuance of the church's long period of tribulation, and reign of Antichrist. This is "the mystery of God." At the time of the reformation it was the expectation of God's true children that Rome was about to be overthrown, that that dread, apostate, persecuting power was speedily to be brought to an end, and thus the mystery of God finished. But the angel swears that the time is not yet come, but will, when the seventh angel shall sound his trumpet. It has been the wonder inexplicable of God's people, and still is, that that awful delusion of popery should continue; that amid the light of the *nineteenth century* its idolatrous and iniquitous claims should be received—that it should still

maintain its supremacy over the consciences of men. It is wonderful. We are amazed at it. Men would have predicted that that mighty Babylon would have sunk in her rottenness ages ago, like a millstone in the sea. But human expectations have been all disappointed. Its appointed time is fixed, but the end is not yet, and will not be, till the seventh trumpet shall send forth its blast, when the catastrophe shall come—great Babylon shall fall, and Christ shall take to himself his righteous sceptre.

The angel had open in his hand a little book, which John was required to take and eat, and which proved sweet as honey in his mouth, but bitter in his belly. By taking this little book and eating it John becomes himself an actor in the symbolic scene, as were the book, and the angel from whose hand he took it. Many of the commentators understand this book to be a part of the apocalypse itself, forming a kind of codicil or appendix to the main portion of the revelations. As an appendix, some understand it to contain the first fourteen verses of the next chapter; others, the whole of the next four chapters; and others again, the remainder of the apocalypse. But this interpretation is based entirely on the assumption that the angel coming down from heaven is Christ; therefore they conclude that the open book must mean the revelations he was about to make to his servant John. John however was appointed to *write* his revelations, not to *eat* them. If he ate them, too, how could they have constituted an appendix in what follows? It is also incongruous with the whole subject to make a part of the revelation itself, communicated to John, a symbol; and if a symbol, a symbol not of itself, but of something else. We have shown, moreover, that the angel is not Christ, for when he appears, he comes in his own character, and not in that of another.

By the little book or scroll is, doubtless, intended the open Bible which the reformers gave to the church, and which for centuries had been a sealed book in the hands of the great apos-

tacy. In such application of the symbol, we do not adopt the literal mode of interpretation, because we do not make the little book to stand as a symbol merely of a larger book, as the bible is, but of God's *revealed will* ; in the same manner that the seven sealed volume was a symbol of the *divine purposes*. It will be remembered how, under the third seal, he of the black horse went forth, laying his exactions upon the word and truth of God, bringing in a dread spiritual famine. That famine continued to prevail without abatement until the glorious reformers appeared with the open bible, which they gave freely to all, into which all were permitted to look, and search for themselves. It is the grand distinguishing doctrine of the Protestant churches, that the Bible is the sole standard of faith and practice, and that every man may read and interpret it for himself. It is an *open bible*—open to all. So the little book in the hand of the angel was open, not shut or sealed.

John became a symbol of the church or people, in taking the book and eating it. Its being sweet as honey in his mouth represents the eagerness and joy with which those living oracles were received and read, and the value that was set upon them ; while the bitterness which it produced in the belly is a symbol of the dissensions, controversies, and animosities, of which it would be the occasion. We know well how remarkably this has met its fulfilment ; how precious, yea, sweeter than honey, an open bible has been to the Protestant churches ; how they have ever gloried in it, and how, too, they have been bitterly reproached by the papacy for this very thing, as the sole cause of all their troubles and dissensions. The doctrine of that apostacy is, that an open Bible cannot be placed in the hands of the people, but that they must receive the teachings of the mother church, who will interpret the Bible for them, and tell them what it contains. Thus has the black horseman, with his balances in his hand, exacting his measure of wheat for a penny, and

three measures of barley for a penny, forever careered within the circuit of that ecclesiastical despotism, and will, without change, to the end ; while an open Bible has ever been the glory of the Protestant churches. Sweet it has been to their taste, and though it has proved the source of dissensions, through the infirmity of human nature, yet we say, give us the dissensions and controversies, sooner a thousand-fold than the gaunt, death-dealing famine which for ages has prevailed within the papacy. God, in mercy, deliver us from the ravages of the black horseman !

After John had eaten the book, the angel said to him, "Thou must prophesy again before many peoples and nations, and tongues, and kings." As already stated, John was here a symbolic actor himself, and representative of the converts to the reformation, or those who received the open volume of inspiration, and to whom it was as honey for sweetness. They, as here stated, were to "prophesy," be witnesses of the truth for God before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings. The members of the Protestant churches are thus designated as the defenders of the faith once delivered to the saints, to testify to the true gospel of the Son of God, and witness for Christ against the usurpations, the corruptions and idolatries of an apostate church. This was a work they were to be called to perform on a vast scale, even before many nations, and in the high places of power and influence, even before kings. The fact, also, that they were thus to be called to prophesy again, or perform the part of witnesses, is clear evidence that the dominant ecclesiastical usurpations were to continue, and the work of persecution from these powers was still to go on. The reformers were to lift up their lion-like voice, and deliver the open volume of heaven to multitudes who would joyfully receive it. But Babylon was not yet to be overthrown ; for against her usurpations, and blasphemies, and fornications, they were called to be the faithful witnesses of

God,—a part which these churches have nobly performed. The wide dissemination of the scriptures, may have been, as prophesied, the occasion of bitterness and dissension. Yet God declares that among those who received his open word, was to be found his true church, those who were to be his faithful witnesses to the truth. In their host was the sacred ark of the covenant to be found.

We have an intimation here, which is brought out more fully in the next chapter, as to what one of the great offices was, which the true church of God was to perform through this period of her history, when apostacy, and usurpation, and iniquity, were to abound. This was to be a witness for Christ, to prophesy in his name before peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings. This was the very work to which Christ designated his disciples before his ascension, when they inquired of him respecting the restoration of the kingdom to Israel. “It is not for you to know the times and the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power; but ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be *witnesses* unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.”—Acts 1: 7, 8.

One fact, of most striking character, is developed in this wonderful book, which is, that the true position and history of the church are more accurately brought to our view than we could have read them in the past.

Look at the expectations of men respecting the papacy as well as the results of the reformation. The expectations of men in regard to neither, have been realized. The downfall of popery has not yet come; nor have the triumphs of the reformation been what was anticipated. Dissensions and controversies have arisen, and the people of God are still in the midst of the period of tribulation and sorrow, prophesying and witnessing to the truth. How strange this wondrous history! What evidence to the divinity of these

scriptures that we have to resort to prophecy recorded long before the events, to give us the clearest views respecting them, even though we can read their record upon the page of history ! Wonderful revelation, indelibly stamped with the footprints of Deity !

SERMON XI.

Chap. 11 : 1-6.—And there was given me a reed like unto a rod : and the angel stood, saying, rise and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple, leave out and measure it not, for it is given unto the Gentiles : and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months. And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophecy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies : and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed, These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy : and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.

THE two principal objects of this vision are the holy temple at Jerusalem, with its altar and court and worshippers, and two witnesses prophesying in sackcloth for twelve hundred and sixty days. These are not objects from the natural world, and therefore we may conclude, that we have not here to do with political events, while the character of the symbols points us clearly to the spiritual history of the church.

The temple is introduced here for measurement, a reed being given to John for that purpose. In our translation the words of the first verse, “ And the angel stood,” are probably an interpolation, being found in very few manuscripts. The speaker, instead of being an angel, is Christ, the same who in the third verse says, “ And I will give power unto my two witnesses.” Some refer this vision of the temple and the holy city, given to the Gentiles to tread under foot, to the destruction of Jerusalem or Jewish institutions. But it cannot be so applied on any principle of symbolic language, The temple with its altar, and court, and the holy City itself, are employed here as symbols, designed of necessity, there-

fore, to represent something analogous, which is none other than the outward, visible Christian Church, with its doctrines and worshippers. Its measurement is designed to show how far it was conformed to the true church; and the reed is the symbol of the revealed will of God, to which the measurement is brought as to a true standard.

By attending now to the arrangement of the temple, and purposes to which its different apartments were put, we shall be enabled to understand the design of the vision.

There was first the inner sanctuary, or the most holy place, where was the sacred ark of the covenant, overshadowed by the cherubim, into which the high priest entered alone, once a year. This we are informed by the apostle Paul, was the shadow of a greater and more perfect tabernacle, where God manifests his glory, where Christ intercedes by his own blood, and where the company of the redeemed, symbolized by the cherubim, unceasingly serve him. In the sanctuary or holy place was the altar of incense and other things, with the officiating Priests and Levites, daily ministering there and offering their sacrifices. The altar is one of the things particularly specified to be measured. Whether the altar of incense or burnt-offering is uncertain. It may mean either; for the same word is used for both. It is here employed as a symbol of the great cardinal doctrine of the church respecting the atonement and mediation of Christ. He was the sacrifice made for sin—the Lamb slain, through whom we have redemption and cleansing, and access to God. Of these truths the temple altar was the representative. John was told also to measure those that worship therein, the officiating ministers in the sanctuary, who thus were made the symbols of the ministers and teachers in the Christian Church.

To measure then the temple of God was to ascertain those great doctrines taught in the Scriptures, and symbolized by the inner sanctuary, the altar, and the Priests—the doctrines

respecting God as the supreme law-giver, the atonement and mediation of Jesus Christ, as the only ground of justification, and the true ministers whom he appointed to officiate in his Church. These were the great truths corrupted by the papacy. God was no longer on the throne, nor was Christ, the supreme head and law-giver in his Church. The pope, as God, sat in the temple of God, showing himself that *he* was God. He legislated supreme in the Church, his decrees and anathemas being as the voice of Jehovah himself. Christ was no longer the only mediator and Saviour of men; for the Virgin Mary and the Saints were exalted to share the mediatorial throne, the mother being more honored than the son, while penances and prayers, and counting of beads, and works of supererogation were far more effectual to the forgiveness of sins, and more relied on, than the blood of Christ. And lastly, in place of the humble ministers whom Christ had appointed in his Church, there were lords and rulers,—an arrogant usurping clergy, asserting the most outrageous claims, taking into their exclusive possession the keys of heaven, and blasphemously maintaining that the Church of Christ could have no ministers, except as they received grace and power so to do by the imposition of their impious hands.

The court of the temple was the space outside of the sanctuary, which was occupied by the congregation, while the worship within was conducted by the priests. John was directed to leave this out, and measure it not, it being given to the Gentiles to tread under foot, or profane for the space of forty and two months. In the estimation of a Jew, the Gentiles were idolators, and out of the covenant of God's mercy. As a symbol then, in occupying the court of the temple, they set forth the fact, that the body of visible worshippers in the church were not the true worshippers entitled to be there, but as Gentiles, an uncircumcised, idolatrous company, rejected by the great Head of the Church, and

having no part in his covenant of mercy. The holy city itself, or Jerusalem, was to be given up to this profane multitude to be desecrated by them for forty and two months, denoting the fact that they were to constitute the external visible church, and exercise the polity under which its administration should be conducted. The church would be as if Jerusalem were given into the exclusive possession of the heathen, and the Jews driven out and treated as aliens. These Gentiles then were to be the ONE UNIVERSAL HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH. But if any weak conscience is troubled with the inquiry whether this holy Catholic Church, is the Church of God, he may, doubtless, find his conscience eased by the divine measurement of the temple here made, "The court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not, for it is given to the Gentiles (heathen worshippers), and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months."

Forty and two months is the same precisely as the twelve hundred and sixty days spoken of in the next verse, during which the witnesses were to prophecy. Forty-two months of thirty days each, is twelve hundred and sixty days. Of the meaning of this we will speak afterward.

The next important object in the vision is the "two witnesses." They are manifestly living agents, and, therefore, represent the same. They are also witnesses to the truth, and therefore found among the true people of God. They are spoken of as "my witnesses," witnesses of Christ, and the period during which they prophesy, or bear their testimony, is the same precisely as that during which the holy city is given to the Gentiles to tread under foot. These facts are sufficient to identify the witnesses as the true church or people of God, who bear witness to his name, and prophesy "in sack-cloth," or in tribulation and sorrow, during the whole period that the outer court of the temple is occupied by the Gentile worshippers.

By some these two witnesses have been referred to the Old and New Testaments. But these are not living agents, and it is also giving a literal meaning to the number two, which is doubtless designed to be symbolic, as are the witnesses. By others they have been referred to the Waldenses and Albigenses. This likewise is applying the number literally. These also were not the only witnesses of Christ, neither did these continue during the period specified. There is no more reason why the Waldenses and Albigenses should be selected than the Lollards and Bohemians. They all performed the same noble part. The time designated for the prophesying of these witnesses is the whole period of the papal apostacy, the forty and two months. The number two symbolically designates their competency, that number being required to constitute legal testimony. The meaning then is that during the whole period of the Romish supremacy, when the court of the temple was given to the Gentiles and they had possession of the holy city, Christ had his own true church, as two witnesses, testifying against the blasphemous usurpation and idolatries of those who arrogantly claimed to be the only true worshippers of the Lord. They testified, "clothed in sackcloth," for the whole period was one of tribulation, and sorrow, and affliction, to the people of God, though the church is not always to be clothed in such attire. The time is coming when the sackcloth shall be taken off, and she be clothed in fine linen, clean and white. (Ch. 19, 8.)

The period mentioned for the prophesying of these witnesses is "a thousand two hundred and three score days." There has been no little controversy among learned men whether these "days" are to be understood literally, or as representative of years. It is not necessary to go into the arguments on one side and the other. The question can be brought within a small compass. Why should not the "days" be taken as symbols, as well as the rest? Time certainly can be symbolized as well as any thing else, and

we take for granted that it is so. We make the "months" and the "days" to be symbols, as we do the temple, the altar, the Gentiles, the witnesses and the sackcloth. If we departed from this, and made the "days" and "months" an exception to all the rest, we should feel the necessity of showing some strong and satisfactory reason, which we certainly are not able to do. We can also perceive the appropriateness of symbolizing years by days or months, because they are *analogous* periods of time—a single revolution of the earth in a day, and the moon in a month, being taken as the representatives of the annual revolution of the same. By the "forty and two months," and the "one thousand two hundred and three score days," we understand then twelve hundred and sixty years. When this period commences we shall not stop here to inquire. It will come up better in another connection.

In the fourth verse the two witnesses are said to be "the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth." Reference is here made to the fourth chapter of Zech., where these same symbols are employed. Two olive trees are represented as standing, one on each side of a golden candlestick, distilling into it their oil for light. In this scene there was one candlestick and two olive trees. The two witnesses, however, are said to be the two olive trees and the two candlesticks. The former doubtless represents the ministers furnishing the oil of truth, and the latter, the churches receiving it and shedding forth their light. Both together then, constitute the two witnesses, or the body of Christ's faithful disciples, who testify in sackcloth during the papal supremacy.

The fire proceeding from their mouth and devouring their enemies, denotes the fact that the only weapons employed by these witnesses against their enemies, and in their own defence, are the words of Divine truth. They boldly declare the Word of God, which is as fire from their mouths, and by that word their enemies are to be overthrown. It is likewise

said of them : " These have power to shut heaven that it rain not in the days of their prophecy ; and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues as often as they will." By which some understand that they, like the prophets of old, were to denounce the judgments of heaven upon their enemies, and that God was to attest their ministry, and vindicate them as his people, by the fulfillment of their threatenings of wrath. I am disposed, however, to understand this as only indicating the fact that these were God's people, sent in his name, as were the prophets of old. Elijah shut up heaven by prayer ; Moses called down the plagues of Egypt ; and these were God's attestations that they were his divinely commissioned servants. So had the two witnesses power to shut up heaven and smite the earth with all plagues, according to their pleasure ; not that they could literally do this, for such was not the truth. But herein was symbolically set forth the fact of their being the appointed servants of God, though few and small, even like Elijah, alone in the midst of apostate Israel, and Moses amid idolatrous Egypt, yet like them, with heaven's seal on their ministry.

I shall not attempt to go into the particular historical verification of the facts set forth in this vision, by showing that even in the darkest days of the papacy, there have been these faithful witnesses of Christ, who have borne their testimony against the usurpations and blasphemies of " the man of sin." The strenuous, unwearied efforts which Rome has been making through all her history to exterminate the vile heretics and rejectors of her authority, is sufficient proof of the existence of Christ's two witnesses prophesying in sackcloth. The mountains of Switzerland and the valleys of France, drenched with the blood of Rome's victims, testify to the truth of Apocalyptic vision. The Paulicians, the Waldenses, the Albigenses, the Bohemians, the Wickliffites, or Lollards of England, as well as others of an early day, have all borne a

part among the noble witnesses of Christ. Though the vast body of worshippers who occupied the court of the temple have been a company of idolatrous Gentiles, rejected of the great head of the church, as not within the measurement of his spiritual kingdom, yet he has ever had his true worshippers and faithful ministers, who have not denied his name. The real church of God has lived and been perpetuated from generation to generation, not through the temple and the uncircumcised Gentiles who have trod the holy city under foot, but through the martyrs or witnesses of Jesus, whom he has clothed with his own spirit, and anointed for their work.

Let me here call your attention to the fact of the parallelism preserved in the series of events. While the court is occupied with the Gentiles forty-two months, the two witnesses of Jesus, also, prophesy during the same period. The history of the great apostacy is given, but right by its side, and in immediate contrast, the history, also, of Christ's true church. In contrast, likewise, with the overthrow of the Western and Eastern empire, with the establishment of Mohammedanism in the Eastern church, and the continuance of idolatry in the Western, as detailed in the six trumpets, we have the glorious reformation of the sixteenth century, both series thence running on to the sounding of the seventh trumpet.

Chap. 11 : 7-14.—And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations, shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another : because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth. And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet ; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven, saying unto them, Come up hither.

the kingdoms. Once more, when these events do take place, it is then immediately announced, "The second wo is past." But this wo, which is the Ottoman power, is not yet past, and therefore, the contemporaneous events of the slaughter and resurrection of the witnesses are still future. These facts would seem to be conclusive on this point.

Let us now turn to the symbols; and if the events represented are in the future, we have nothing to guide us but the nature of the symbols themselves. We cannot, of course, verify any interpretation by history, and should speak with caution and diffidence.

The beast, by whom the witnesses are slain, is he of the seven heads and ten horns, the scarlet colored beast upon which the great whore rode, ch. 17: 3, and symbolizes the Roman empire under the supremacy of the ten horns, or ten Gothic kingdoms. This beast, then, is the combined civil and catholic powers of Europe, which make war with the witnesses, overcome, and kill them.

By killing them, some understand compelling them to silence, or putting an end to their testimony. We do not believe, however, that the witnesses of Jesus, while they have tongues to speak, can be compelled to silence. They never have been. They will seal their testimony with their blood, but silent they never will be. Neither does killing or death seem to be an appropriate symbol of silence. We do not see a proper analogy between them. Of what, then, is the act of killing symbolical? Under the fifths and sixth trumpets we found it to be employed as a symbol of the overthrow of a civil or a religious organization: and so I would apply it here. The following, therefore, is the interpretation to which I should be led by the symbols, but for which I have, of course, no authority besides what they furnish. At the predicted time, the civil powers of Europe will unite for the utter overthrow of the Protestant churches, (which are now the two witnesses) taking away all their

half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves." To leave a body unburied and cast into the public street, where it is exposed naked to the gaze of every passer by, is to treat it with the most shocking indignity and contempt. Insults thus offered to a dead body are also primarily intended for the living person who inhabited it. By this, as a symbol, is designed to set forth the insults, and mockery, and contemptuous scorn which will be heaped by its deriding foes upon the dead carcass of Protestantism. It will be, as it were, cast out into the street of their great city, and there left unburied. The seventeenth chapter informs us what this "great city" is. "And the woman which thou sawest is that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth;" ch. 17: 18. This woman, also, is described in the beginning of the same chapter, as the great whore, sitting on the scarlet colored beast, with a name written on her forehead *Mystery, Babylon the great, The mother of harlots and abominations of the earth*. The same was "drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus." The great city, therefore, is the Romish hierarchy, "which spiritually (or mystically) is called Sodom and Egypt, where, also, our Lord was crucified." It is a mystical Sodom, and Egypt, and Jerusalem. A Sodom for wickedness and lewdness—an Egypt for the oppression and persecution of God's people—a Jerusalem for hatred of Jesus Christ, and crucifixion of his cause. It unites all the wickedness of the most wicked spots on earth, Sodom, Egypt, and Jerusalem; and well, therefore, may it be denominated, "The mystery of iniquity." In the street of this city, then, shall the dead bodies of the witnesses lie unburied for three and an half days. This exposure of their bodies in the great thoroughfare of Babylon shows clearly what agency the papacy will have in their death. It is the *beast* that kills them. The civil arm of power wields the instrument of death. But their unburied corpses are cast

heaven, bidding them come up, and their ascending in the sight of their enemies? I understand it as a symbol to denote that the resuscitated cause of Protestantism is called to occupy the most conspicuous places of power and influence in these very civil governments, which but just now were united for its overthrow. "Heaven" may be employed as a symbol of the political firmament. The cause of Christianity and the Protestant churches then becomes triumphant, and its enemies, in sore dismay, without any power to interfere or prevent, behold it borne as on a cloud into the very seats of influence and power.

This interpretation is no little confirmed by another event which follows, "in the same hour"—a great earthquake, in which a tenth part of the city falls, seven thousand men are slain, and the remnant affrighted give the glory to God. These facts show the existence of tremendous political revolutions, such as shake to its fall a tenth part of that great city, in which lay the unburied corpses of the witnesses. The nationalized hierarchy, as connected with one of the ten kingdoms, is cast to the ground, and the truth of the mystical Sodom is no more. I have already intimated that France may be that kingdom, though this of course is only conjecture. In these convulsions seven thousand men are slain. In the original it is, seven thousand *names* of men. By this is not meant the death of seven thousand men, for this is taking it in its literal signification, and this likewise would be a very small number to be slain in a great political revolution. Something else doubtless is intended, but what precisely, I am not able to say; perhaps the casting down of the whole multitude of the high civil or ecclesiastical dignitaries who ruled in the great city. Seven is frequently employed as a sacred or perfect number; and seven thousand names of men may indicate the whole tribe of ecclesiastics, and usurping lords over God's heritage.

It may be seen now how the last facts connected with this

from the views of others, I humbly submit them to your consideration.

I may add, however, that the history of Europe for the last three or four years gives no little significancy to such a series of events as is here indicated. I do not say that such events might be looked for from anything that has transpired. But the deep and universal agitation of the great elements of European society shows clearly that there is the *capacity* for just such sudden and terrific upturnings as are here described. A century ago, and even much less than that, Europe was locked in the death-embraces of despotism. There was the cold rigidity of a corpse in the whole framework of society. Then such events as are here predicted, might have seemed beyond the bounds of possibility. But the last three years has given abundant proof that Europe is sleeping upon the crater of a volcano, and is just in that state to prepare her for the most fearful convulsions. It seems only necessary to apply the match at a given point, and revolutions roll like the mighty tread of an earthquake through the kingdoms. Yea, the Pope himself abandons his throne, and flees affrighted from the back door of his palace, to escape revolutionary republicanism boldly entering at the front. Despotism unquestionably is yet strong there, and more than a match for the young giant of liberty, yet we see there is that very conflict between the powers of despotism and the masses of the people indicated in the symbols of the vision. But a year or two ago, many were indulging the fond hope that republicanism and liberty, with light and truth, were to take possession of the nations there. But that dream is dissipated. Grim despotism is gathering up the weapons and chains which were so suddenly knocked from his hands, and is now quietly riveting and binding them as before. But the same explosive elements are still there, and only gathering force for being the longer confined. We expect to see the mountain again quaking, the smoke issuing forth, and the

SERMON XII.

Chap. 11 : 15-19.—And the seventh angel sounded ; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come ; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great ; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth. And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament : and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.

It is conceded by the commentators generally that the events referred to in this vision are not presented in their proper order of time. The announcement is first made that the millennial reign of Christ has commenced, and then follows an account of the mighty judgments which evidently precede the establishment of that kingdom. One thing, however, has been generally overlooked in this vision, which makes every thing harmonious and consistent. This is, that the symbolic scene here presented is laid in heaven, and not on earth, and represents events transpiring there before the throne and not below. The vision is not designed to describe the events connected with the introduction of Christ's kingdom, as they are actually to take place. That is done afterwards. But here we are carried up to heaven, and permitted to witness the joy and transports of its inhabitants in view of the arrival of that long expected, glorious era, and hear the loud bursting song of praise from their lips as they swell the chorus of victory and judgment. We see the events only as they are introduced into *the song of heaven*, and forming the occasion of their sublime ascriptions of

and malice of his foes, and the wrath of the nations toward him, he had still reigned in his great power, controlling them at his pleasure, and restraining them within the limits which he had fixed. The heathen had raged, the kings of the earth had set themselves, and the rulers taken counsel together. But he that sitteth in the heavens did laugh at their impotent rage, saying, "hitherto shall thou come, but no farther, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." Thou hast reigned. And now we thank thee that "thy wrath is come"—the time of judgment on thy foes, and of reward to thy servants—the long expected time, to which thy saints have been looking through all the period of their tribulation, and often cried, "O Lord, how long?" They have wondered why thy wrath has so long delayed, and thou hast not ere this avenged their blood. But that expected day has now come—"the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, both small and great; and shouldst destroy them which destroy the earth." The ground of their thanksgiving then is, that the saints of Christ are all now rewarded, and they avenged on their enemies and persecuted by their destruction. This is the song of heaven, and the sentiment of all the redeemed company.

The vision closed with the opening of the temple in heaven, in which was seen the ark of the testament, and then a terrific scene of lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail. Under these two symbols, I suppose to be set forth, in a very general manner, the two great leading facts already referred to, and forming the theme of heaven's joy and thanksgiving—the overthrow of God's enemies, or the revolutions and judgments attending it, and the reign of Christ. The lightnings, voices, thunderings, earthquake, and hail are symbolic of the mighty convulsions, conflicts, and judgments which attend the final downfall of

Before proceeding farther in the exposition of this book, I wish to bring before you, in a brief manner, the prophecies of Daniel, which cover the same period of time, and refer to the same great events. As I shall have occasion to refer frequently to these, it will be much to our advantage to dwell briefly upon them.

The first prophecy of Daniel respecting these events, is that of Nebuchadnezzar's great image, contained in the second chapter, which was explained by the interpreting angel to represent the four great monarchies or kingdoms which should rule the world until Christ should set up his kingdom, never to be done away. The head of gold was the Assyrian monarchy; the breast and arms of silver, the Medo-Persian empire; the belly and thighs of brass, the Grecian kingdom; the legs of iron, the Roman empire. A distinction is made between the legs proper and the feet, the former being all of iron, the latter of iron and clay mixed. The legs, therefore, represent the Roman empire previous to its overthrow by the Northern barbarians; while the feet and ten toes represent the same under the ten Gothic kingdom's, being the same with John's beast with seven heads and ten horns. "And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron and part of clay so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly broken (or brittle). And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay." There has been no little difficulty in determining the meaning of this mixture of iron and clay, or according to the other statement in the text, their mingling "themselves with the seed of men." The difficulty, however, seems to be unraveled by applying the principle of sym-

all these civil and ecclesiastical powers which had ruled the world for so many ages. They were to be ground to powder, and blown like chaff away, that no place was found for them. This representation, therefore, is exactly parallel with the great earthquake of the sixth seal, when the heavens are rolled together as a scroll, and every mountain and island is moved out of its place.

Again, this vision shows us that the kingdom of Christ is not set up until these earthly kingdoms are taken out of the way. The stone is in the earth: and Christ has his church as such, a stone cut from the mountain. But his church will not become his kingdom, until the stone becomes the mountain to fill all the earth. We are expressly told, also, that "in the days of these kings (those represented by the feet and toes) shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed." If the church properly is Christ's kingdom, then it existed as long ago as Abraham, or back even beyond the deluge. But his "kingdom," as here spoken of, will not be set up until the rapturous shout resounds through heaven's lofty concave, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever." This will appear, too, the more striking when we notice how Daniel prophesies concerning Christ's first coming. "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision, and to anoint the Most Holy. Know, therefore, and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks and threescore and two weeks. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself." Dan. 9: 24-26. Here Christ comes to *make atonement and take away transgression*. At the other period, he comes to *set up his kingdom* which shall never be destroyed.

time. I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." The meaning of this vision is thus explained to Daniel. "These great beasts," which are four, are four kings (four dynasties of kings or monarchies) which shall arise out of the earth. But the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom, for ever, even for ever and ever. Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and trampled the residue under his feet. And of the ten horns, &c." "Thus he said. The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings (dynasties of kings or monarchies as before) that shall arise, and another shall rise after them, and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change time and laws, and they shall be given into his hand until a time, and times, and the dividing of time. But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom, and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." Here we are brought to the same great epoch of the world's history, as

and Spain; 4, Vandals in Africa; 5, Franks in France; 6, Burgundians in Burgundy; 7, Heruli and Turingi in Italy; 8, Saxons and Anglis in Britain; 9, Huns in Hungary; 10, Lombards at first on the Danube and afterwards in Italy. Other distinguished historians and chronologers agree substantially with this. These kingdoms all arose within one hundred and seventy years. We are not to suppose that this same division continued, and that these ten kingdoms can now be traced out upon the maps of Europe. In fact, Daniel himself speaks of the plucking up of three of them to give place to the little horn. When, therefore, we speak of these ten kingdoms, we refer to this as the number originally formed, but not now to be identified among the European nations. Changes have been constantly going on among the kingdoms there, but however combined or changed, the ten above-named were the original stock from which they sprang.

But let us turn to notice more particularly the little horn. We shall give reasons to show that this was the papacy, the same with the two-horned beast of John, of which we shall speak hereafter. This little horn was not one of the ten, as it came up "among them," and three of them also were plucked up to give it room. It is likewise distinctly stated to "be derived from the first." It was not therefore a civil power like them. It grew up among the ten horns of the Roman empire, but was not one of them. The fact is also clearly established, that three of the ten kingdoms were plucked up *before* the papacy, not *by* it; for it is not stated that the little horn had any agency in their destruction, but only that they were removed, as if to give it room. These three kingdoms were as follows. The kingdom of the Heruli in Italy, whose king, Odoacer, triumphed over the last emperor of the west, was subverted by Theodoric, and by him the kingdom of the Ostrogoths was established. This in turn was subverted by the Lombards, and theirs again by

of the saints ; the beast also shall be slain, and his body given to the burning flame ; and then “the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.”

These particulars are sufficient clearly to identify this little horn as the papacy. The only question that remains for consideration is, from what period are we to date the twelve hundred and sixty years, during which the saints are delivered into his hands ?

It is evident that the little horn came up and had an existence for a considerable period before the saints were delivered into his hand. It came up as a *little* horn, very unpretending at first, but it grew in reality to be a great horn, “whose look was more stout than his fellows.” It is described as “little,” because such was its first appearance, none imagining what it would grow to. So the papacy grew up as a “little horn” among the other ten, gradually and imperceptibly, and from the time that the saints were delivered into his hand we must date the twelve hundred and sixty years. Faber makes the following observations in regard to fixing the dates of prophecies :—“In prophecies, which are strictly chronological, the overt acts of communities, or the heads of communities, are necessarily alone considered in the fixing of dates ; because it would be impossible for us to know how to date any particular period from the insulated and unauthorized acts of individuals. But in prophecies which are not strictly chronological, the scope is much more wide, and much less definite ; extending not merely to communities and their heads, but to every individual whose actions the prophecies may describe. On these grounds there are two entirely different dates to the apostacy. The first is its date when considered as relating to individuals : the second is its date when considered as relating to that

previously. The red, and black, and pale horsemen had been careering in triumph over the earth; and all these were necessary to the development of "the Man of Sin." "That son of perdition" could not have been revealed without the previous corruption of the church to an extreme degree. It was this very corruption that prepared the way for his coming, and led men to submit to the authority of the supreme headship of this Universal Bishop. Beyond this point also the papacy could take no higher step. This was the top round of the ecclesiastical ladder. Previous to this, the titles conferred upon the Metropolitan of Rome were the *Bishop of Rome, Primate of Italy, and Apostle of the West*. When also the Patriarch of Constantinople assumed to himself (for it was not conferred upon him by another) the extraordinary title of Universal Bishop, Gregory the Great, then Bishop of Rome, condemned it in the most decided manner, and distinctly affirmed it to be an antichristian title. Yet, within a very few years afterward, this very same title was conferred by an authorized act upon the Bishop of Rome, which he accepted without demurring, and which the whole Romish communion have claimed for him to this day. The Pope now claims to be the Universal Bishop, having spiritual jurisdiction over the whole earth, a right to reign supreme in all its ecclesiastical affairs, and to hand over to anathema and destruction all who dare dispute his authority. He claims the *right* to rule here in this Congregational church, as well as over all our Protestant churches, just as he does in Rome itself. It may not be prudent for him to enforce his claims: it may not be possible for him to do so: but the *right* he claims in its fullest extent. Our churches, he says, are no churches; we are all damnable heretics; and if we do not repent of our sin, and humbly return to holy mother church, he is authorized to deliver us all over to perdition. It is in the exercise of this very right, that he has recently extended his hierarchy over Great Britain, and by the actual

given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground, and it practised and prospered." The following is the explanation of the vision by the angel: "And the rough goat is the king of Grecia, and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king. Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power. And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power; and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many. He shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand."

Here then we have a little horn rising out of one of the four horns of the Grecian goat, not very unlike the little horn which came up among the ten horns of the Roman beast: and the symbols employed show clearly that this was a spiritual power also, and not an ordinary civil horn. We will note the facts briefly, and show that Mohammedanism is the little horn. The rise of the horn is "in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full." By "the transgressors" is doubtless intended, and as many agree, the corruption and idolatries of the Western church, and their coming to the full, the complete development of the Man of Sin, which, as shown already, was A. D. 606, when the Bishop of Rome was made Head of the Church Universal. This agrees also with "the latter time of their kingdom," the latter end of one of these Greek monarchies, that of the Seleucidæ. It was now at this time, and in the very year 606, that the smoke from the bottomless pit was

greatest prophet whom God should send into the world. "But he shall be broken without hand." His power shall not be overthrown as civil powers are, by the sword; but shall come to its end by other means. In the original vision, also, the same is described as "the transgression of desolation, by whom "some of the host and of the stars" were cast to the ground, "the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down" and trodden under foot. Under these symbols the triumph of Moham-medanism over the Eastern church is strikingly set forth—the stars denoting the ministers, and the daily sacrifice and sanctuary, the Christian church and ordinances.

The inquiry is also made, "How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?" By which is meant, how long is the power of this little horn to continue? The answer is, "Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." There are different readings in the versions of this number, some making it twenty-two hundred, some twenty-three hundred, and some twenty-four hundred. Another difficulty is, to determine the point from which to date the period. The more probable point, though not certain, is the commencement of the vision, when Daniel saw the ram standing by the river and smitten by the he goat. That blow was given by Alexander when he obtained his first victory over Darius, at the river Granicus, B. C. 334. Counting twenty-two hundred years from this date, brings us exactly to the termination of the twelve hundred and sixty years, which date from A. D. 606. In other words, twenty-two hundred years from the overthrow of the ram by the Grecian goat, and twelve hundred and sixty from the rise of the papacy, terminate at the same point, A. D. 1866.

I do not give this calculation as one that can be relied on with any certainty, for on such points there is no little uncer-

“But the wicked shall do wickedly.” The persecuting enemies of the church will persevere in their iniquity, “and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand. And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, (referring probably to the Papal and Mohammedan delusions) there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days,”—a point thirty years beyond the twelve hundred and sixty years. “Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days,” which is thirty-five years longer still. This last date may fix the beginning of Christ’s glorious reign, for he is pronounced blessed who waits to see it; while the termination of the twelve hundred and sixty years may mark the time when the last judgments are to begin upon these apostate powers, resulting in their final complete overthrow. Their dominancy is for the period mentioned, not including the time occupied in their overthrow. That may be in the interval of thirty or seventy-five years mentioned between the twelve hundred and sixty and the thirteen hundred and thirty-five years, the last of which is the blessed period foretold.

not be arrayed so splendidly, or placed in such a position. The dragon was seen in the same quarter, his tail drawing the third part of the stars. I am not certain but that the imagery is drawn, in part at least, from the heavenly constellations; the first being represented as a woman, having the sun for her body, the moon for her feet, and twelve bright stars for her head; the other as a dragon, his tail sweeping a third of the stars. Their position in heaven indicates, as we shall see hereafter, that the political government of Rome was the scene of their operations. It was upon this scene that the woman first appeared, though ere long she fled, and found another and more appropriate place for herself in the wilderness.

The dragon, a beast from the natural world, would properly symbolize a tyrannical, persecuting government. This was a red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. In the following chapter, John saw rising out of the sea a beast with the same number of heads and horns, but ten crowns on his horns. And the dragon gave him (the beast) his power, and his seat and great authority, ch. 13: 2. The only difference between these two, was that one had the crowns on his heads, the other on his horns. They represent the same great power, the Roman empire, and are the fourth terrible beast of Daniel. The dragon, however, is that empire, when he had his crowns on his heads. The beast the same empire when the crowns were transferred to the horns. One is Rome before its overthrow by the barbarians; the other, after.

By the seven heads are intended the seven forms of government under which Rome subsisted through the different periods of her history, and which wore the crown, the symbol of supreme authority and power. This is the explanation given by the angel. "And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space," ch. 17:

this, the vision clearly represents something in the future, whereas the birth of Christ was a fact of the past.

The representative of this man-child is to be found in another quarter, in a succession of Christian emperors, to whom the church was led at this time to look, and earnestly desire as the instruments of their deliverance from pagan persecutors. These had been long and terrible, particularly under Diocletian; and the attention of the church had been directed to Constantine, a Prince of eminent ability, favorable also to Christianity, and one who had every probability of succeeding to the throne. The cries, and pain, and travailing of this woman are symbolic of the anxious, agonizing expectations of the people of God, that one might arise from among them who should come to the empire, and rule the nations with a rod of iron. The dragon standing ready to devour the child as soon as born, represents, on the other hand, the efforts and desire of the pagan rulers to prevent, by all means, the elevation of a Christian emperor.

. These facts, now, will show why the woman was seen in heaven just where the dragon was. The church was found, as it were, in the political firmament, looking for a deliverer there. She was seeking to give birth to a civil ruler, from whom she might hope for great deliverance. We shall see how far her anxious hopes were realized.

History confirms the fact that the Pagan rulers were as deeply interested to prevent the accession of Constantine as a Christian emperor, as the church was to secure it. When Constantius, his father, who was also favorable to Christianity, was upon his death bed in Britain, the son was held as hostage in Rome, by the emperor Galerius, who was contriving every means of treachery to secure his death, from which Constantine escaped only by the good providence of God. The machinations of the enemy were all foiled, Constantine acceded to the empire, and the woman thus gave birth to the man-child. Her child, however, "was caught up to God,

with the whole strength of the civil arm ; just as the emperors before him had sustained paganism, and as Henry VIII. thought, when he made himself the supreme head of the church of England, instead of the Pope. It will hardly be necessary to add, that such *help* from the Christian emperors was as disastrous to the best interests of Zion, as the deadly persecution of the pagan emperors had been for two centuries preceding. Yea, doubtless, more so ; for under those persecutions the church had lived and grown. But when Zion brought forth the unnatural progeny of a *man-child*, “who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron,” she soon found that she was under that same iron rod herself, and was compelled to flee into the wilderness for safety and protection from her own offspring. This, indeed, was the natural consequence, though it has taken the world long ages to find it out. Christianity was made popular in the empire by the whole influence of the court and law being thrown on its side. The way to political honor and preferment was through the church ; and multitudes, who before had been indifferent or enemies even to Christianity, became now its outward supporters. But the accessions made to its piety—its spirituality—its purity, in this way were small. The church, under an outward show of prosperity, became rapidly corrupt ; and in about the same period of time that the persecutions had prevailed under the pagan emperors, the church found herself, through the dominance and *help* of their Christian protectors, driven into the wilderness. Constantine was proclaimed emperor A. D. 306, and exactly three hundred years after, as we have already seen, in order to *honor, protect, and benefit* the church to the utmost, the emperor, Phocas, conferred upon the Metropolitan of Rome the title of Universal Bishop, thus fully developing the Man of Sin. At this point of time, was the woman compelled to seek her safety in flight, and her only refuge was the wilderness, by which is meant a desert place, as contrasted with the abodes men, and as a symbol,

represents that the true church of God was no longer found in the visible, crowded organization, but beyond the pale of these civil and ecclesiastical structures. In this wilderness, God found the manna to nourish his spiritual Israel. The flight of the woman did not then take place immediately upon the birth of her child; not, in fact, till three centuries after, dating from the beginning of the twelve hundred and sixty years, which was the time of her continuance in the wilderness.

Chap. 12: 7-17.—And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Wo to the inhabitants of the earth, and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man-child. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood, after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman; and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

The prominent characters of this vision are the Archangel Michael with his angels, joined in battle with the dragon and his angels. This, however is not the dragon of the preceding vision, which had seven heads and ten horns, and symbolized the Roman empire. This one is distinctly stated to be "that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world." We have then the hosts of heaven led on by

Michael, engaged with the infernal powers marshaled under their great Prince of darkness. The result of the conflict was the complete overthrow of Satan and his hosts, so that they were cast out of heaven into the earth, and no place there was found for them any more.

We must naturally look to the spiritual history of the church for the fulfillment of this vision, the symbolic actors being the highest order of created intelligences. That the people of God were actors on one side, under the symbol of Michael and his angels, is clear also from the subsequent statement, that "they overcame him (the dragon) by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of his testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death." The victory was achieved by the power of truth, and the Gospel of the Son of God, to which the followers of Christ adhered in face of martyrdom, willing to yield their lives rather than the cause for which they contended.

The party represented by the devil and his angels is supposed by some to be the papacy; and the victory achieved, the Reformation of the sixteenth century, when the Romish church was cast out from the position of power and influence which it had before. But this interpretation fails entirely of meeting the requisitions of the symbols. The papacy, instead of being overcome by the people of God and cast out, so that his place was no more found, is represented, on the contrary, as prevailing, and having the saints given into his hand. The papacy, also, is described under other symbols of a different character, either as a beast, or the horn of one, or a vile harlot. Rome is the two horned beast and great whore described by John, and the little horn of Daniel. The time of this conflict, moreover, is pointed out as previous to the flight of the woman into the wilderness, two wings of a great eagle being given by which to assist her escape to her prepared place. This shows that the Reformation of the sixteenth century cannot be intended:

unto the death. The heathen had witnessed the blameless conduct, the heroic sufferings and courage of these martyrs; and though they died by thousands and tens of thousands, their numbers were not diminished. Their holy cause spread more and more widely, taking deeper and deeper hold, until the victory finally was obtained, and the dragon with his angels cast out.

At this glorious result a loud voice was heard in heaven, saying, "Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night." This expresses the rejoicings of the church, probably, over their deliverance, and is their glad song of triumph over the downfall of the temples and altars of heathenism. The same voice likewise proclaimed, "Wo to the inhabitants of the earth, and of the sea, for the devil is come down to you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time," which represents the violence of the pagan party upon its defeat, being exasperated to the exercise of greater opposition and cruelty wherever the means and power were still in their hands. The days of paganism in the empire were numbered. The devil knew that he had but a short time; therefore he came down in great wrath. This is accordant, too, with the facts of history. Paganism did not die an easy death. It struggled hard; and in portions of the empire where the party favoring it was strong, it showed its deadly malignity and opposition to Christianity by every act of cruelty which it could inflict upon the followers of Jesus.

When the dragon was cast out into the earth, having no more place in the political firmament, "he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man-child." The first and most simple meaning of the original word translated "persecuted," is *to cause to flee*, whence *to follow after*, to *persecute*. This original meaning would seem to apply well here. He caused

the woman which brought forth the man-child to flee, which accords with the idea of the following verse, "And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent." The idea of persecution is involved, and such persecution as caused her to fly. There is an apparent incongruity, or rather contradiction of statement, in reference to the symbols here,—a contradiction, however, which throws light upon the whole subject, and makes it more clear and striking.

It will be noticed that the woman and Michael with his angels symbolize the same object,—the people of God. Under the latter symbol they were triumphant, and the dragon was defeated. Yet as soon as he was cast out, he turned upon the woman and caused her to flee, and thus *the church* became the defeated party. By this representation the pagan party is exhibited as *prevailing* in the very midst of its *defeat*, and the church *defeated* in the very midst of its *triumph*.

This is explained satisfactorily by noticing carefully the facts. In the war of Michael, the church prevailed "by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony." She was here in her own proper sphere, adhering steadfastly to the truth, and God gave her the glorious victory. But as the woman in heaven, placing her hopes upon "a man-child," she was out of her sphere, and could not prevail against the dragon. When the church fixed herself in the political firmament, she had abandoned her own appropriate position as a witness of Jesus, and the dragon had the advantage over her. He pursued until he drove her into the wilderness. When Christianity was nationalized, and sustained by political power, the pagan party entered the hierarchy in disguise, and the true church of Christ found, ere long, that there was no place there for her, and she fled.

As to the meaning of "the two wings of a great eagle" given to the woman to aid her flight, I am unable to form any opinion. Some apply them to "the grace and providence of God which watched over the church. Others to "the spiritual gifts of faith, knowledge, wisdom, constancy, and love," which, like supporting wings, bore the church above her enemies. But I cannot perceive that the wings of an eagle properly symbolize such things. They are not drawn from the right source. *Perhaps* nothing more is intended by the wings than to denote the fact of her successful flight. With the wings of such a powerful bird, she was enabled to escape, so that the dragon could not overtake her; she was born above his reach.

"And the serpent cast out of his mouth water, as a flood, after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth."

Here is rather an unusual combination of symbols from different departments. The serpent, a flood of water, the woman, and the earth: and the two last, as allies, is an unlooked for circumstance. Some apply the flood of waters to the errors and false doctrines with which the pagan party overspread the church, heathenism being introduced into it, baptized with the name of Christianity. It is certainly an appropriate *figure of speech* to say, a flood of error and false doctrine. But whether a flood of waters is a proper *symbol* of the same, is another question. I do not think it is. Water, being an object of nature, would point us to something in the political world: and we shall find that false doctrines, in the form of infidelity, are appropriately symbolized under the first vial, ch. 16: 2, by "a noisome and grievous sore," such sore upon the human body fitly representing pestilent error of mind and heart.

There is not a little difficulty in verifying the symbol, but

professed Christianity and sustained a corrupt church, while the woman escaped into the wilderness.

“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus.” The dragon was enraged that he had not been successful in carrying away the woman with the flood, and that she escaped his hand by finding a safe retreat in the wilderness. In his fury, however, he made war upon “the remnant of her seed,” and persecuted them wherever they could be found. The church of God he could not destroy or exterminate, but he could make war upon its individual members.

In conclusion, let me here refer to a point which we passed over some time since. It may be recollected that many of the commentators apply the earthquake of the sixth seal to the overthrow of paganism in the empire and the establishment of Christianity. I stated my reasons at the time for dissenting entirely from this interpretation, and among others, the fact that those events were described subsequently under very different symbols, and far more appropriate. You may judge now of the force of the reason. In the visions of the present chapter we have the mingled symbols of a woman—and man-child—and dragon with seven heads and ten horns—the war of Michael and the devil—the persecution of the woman by the dragon—her flight into the wilderness, the flood of waters, and the earth helping the woman. These symbols, drawn from nature, and human life, and angelic beings, properly describe the mingled political and ecclesiastical events of that period, but are wholly unlike the terrific earthquake and convulsions of the sixth seal, which point us clearly to political events alone, and those of the most destructive character, even the utter overthrow and sweeping away of the institutions of society. In the time of Constantine there were no such convulsions in the state whatever. The great political event of that period was the *birth of a man-child*—but no mighty earthquake.

SERMON XIV.

Chap. 13 : 1-10.—And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion : and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death ; and his deadly wound was healed : and all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast, and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast ? who is able to make war with him ? And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies ; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them : and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If any man have an ear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity : he that killeth with the sword, must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

IN our last discourse, we identified the dragon with seven heads and ten horns, standing ready to devour the man-child about to be born, as the Roman empire, or the fourth great beast of Daniel ; but that empire previous to the overthrow of its Western division ; for the crowns, which are the symbols of sovereignty, were on its heads. In the present vision, John saw a beast rising out of the sea with the same heads and horns, but ten crowns on the horns. Its rising “out of the sea” denotes that it came up in an agitated state of society, when the elements were all in commotion, like the waves of the sea ; while the crowns upon its horns show that the sovereignty of the beast was now in them, having passed away from the heads. In a previous discourse, an account was given of the ten Gothic kingdoms which succeeded to the fall of the Western empire, and which most

truly came into existence in a tumultuous state of society. The Roman empire had been overrun and ravaged by the swarming hordes of barbarians from the North; and from the mingled chaos of old and new institutions, arose these ten horns or kingdoms, to which the sovereignty was transferred.

This beast is represented with the body of a leopard, the feet of a bear, and the mouth of a lion, thus combining the remarkable qualities of agility, strength, and terribleness of aspect, which characterize these most formidable monsters of the forest. In the prophecy of Daniel, the Assyrian empire is symbolized by a lion—the Medo-Persian by a bear—the Greek by a leopard. This beast of John is made to combine the three, having the body of a leopard, the feet of a bear, and the mouth of a lion. Well, therefore, did he answer to Daniel's fourth beast, so exceeding dreadful and terrible.

“And the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority,”—denoting that the beast, under the supremacy of the ten horns, succeeded to the dominion held by the dragon under the seven heads. As symbolic beasts, that is, as bodies of tyrannical, persecuting rulers, the dragon and the beast had a perfect sympathy and understanding with each other; one being the successor of the other, and retaining the same power, seat, and great authority. It was like an old established firm retiring and giving their stand and credit and well earned character to a new partnership, to conduct the same business.

“And I saw one of his heads, as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed.” These heads have been shown to be the different kinds of government under which the Roman empire subsisted: kings, consuls, dictators, decemvirs, military tribunes, emperors, and the last still to come at the time the Revelation was given. The sixth, or imperial head, was then in existence. When that fell, the seventh was to succeed, and continue to the final

destruction of the beast. One of these heads, now, was wounded in a frightful manner, "as it were," or apparently to death, though not actually so, for afterward it was healed, and became sound as before. The wound had every appearance of proving mortal, but such was not the issue. In ch. 17, where the beast is described again, the same fact is referred to in a different form, as "the beast which was, and is not, and yet is." These two different descriptions will serve to explain each other.

The head which was wounded was evidently the imperial one, for the first five had already fallen when the Revelation was given, and the seventh had not yet come at the time of this vision. It should be noted that the head was not *cut off* or *destroyed* in any way, for that would have produced the death of the beast; but it was *wounded* in a terrible manner, which might naturally have caused death; but unexpectedly the wound was healed.

By observing carefully what it is that constitutes a symbolic beast, we shall be able clearly to ascertain the meaning of this deadly wound. A beast then is not simply a civil government or body of rulers, but an *antichristian, persecuting* government. A useful domestic animal is not selected as the symbol, but a wild, ferocious beast, carnivorous and savage. Such an animal symbolizes a succession or dynasty of ungodly, antichristian, persecuting rulers, opposed to the church and cause of God. To kill a beast, therefore, is not to destroy the government of a nation, but to destroy it as such an antichristian government, or to take away its wild, ferocious character. If it ceases to be a beast, it ceases only its carnivorous tendencies. The deadly wound, then, which this head received, denotes that its life as a *beast* was nearly taken. It received well nigh a mortal stroke; or, according to the symbol of ch. 17, it was a beast—it ceased for awhile to be one—then became a beast again. The fulfillment of this is found in the accession to the throne of a succession of

Christian emperors, beginning with Constantine, who ceased to persecute the people of God, and devour his church. Had that succession continued, there would have been an end of the beast; his wound would have proved mortal. But unfortunately the wound was healed, and the beast was restored. The Christian succession was interrupted, and the government resumed again its ancient *beastly* character. The imperial rulers did not become pagan, as before, but yet as decidedly antichristian and persecuting. The healing of this deadly wound is probably to be dated from the period when the Emperor Phocas proclaimed the Pope Universal Bishop, and thus, by this act, set himself as the ally of the church's most bitter foe, and the supporter of apostacy. This is confirmed by the subsequent statement, that "There was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months," the period of the papal apostacy. It is not intended by this to assert that the ten kingdoms arose at the same point of time with the papacy. For such is not the fact. The little horn of Daniel came up *among* the ten horns, and these were rising through a period of one hundred and seventy years from first to last, up to A. D. 526. They all consequently came into existence previous to the development of the Man of Sin. But as *a beast*, exhibiting their antichristian persecuting character, they commenced again with the Western apostacy, and thus continued with it for the forty and two months. Before this, during the interval of the Christian succession, the beast "was not." But he resumed his character as of old, when he constituted the Pope supreme ruler of the church, delivered the saints into his hands, and thus established and sustained the claims of antichrist. In accordance with this, the Romish hierarchy, under the symbol of the great whore, is represented as sitting upon this very beast, ch. 17: 3, thus denoting the close alliance which subsisted between them.

conscience, and that they must obey God rather than man.

A mouth given to the beast, which was opened to speak blasphemies, denotes an assumption by him of ecclesiastical power and prerogatives. A mouth to speak is a thing not properly belonging to a beast, but human beings alone. As it was also employed only in uttering blasphemies, it points out the usurping claims which these civil powers have arrogated to themselves over the church of God. By blasphemy is not meant the uttering of impious words against Jehovah, but the denial of Christ's prerogatives as the supreme lawgiver and head of his church, and the claiming of them by another. Throughout the Apocalypse this supremacy is asserted as belonging exclusively to the Lamb. He is exalted to the throne supreme over all; and his final purpose is to put down everything that sets itself up against his righteous sovereignty. It is blasphemy now for any earthly power to invade these high and sacred prerogatives of Christ, and assume or countenance that supremacy which he claims for himself alone. This the beast has done. He has asserted dominion over the church, and supported the impious pretensions of Antichrist. He has blasphemed the "name" of God by usurping his rights. He has blasphemed "his tabernacle" by claiming jurisdiction over the doctrines and worship of the church, of which the tabernacle is a symbol. What is meant by blaspheming against "them that dwell in heaven," I do not clearly understand. Heaven may be taken, perhaps, as the government of the church, and those dwelling in it, as the true ministers of Christ. Blaspheming them would be the denial of their right to preach the Gospel, and labor as the appointed ministers of Jesus. It is questionable, however, whether this is the true interpretation,

"And power was given unto him to continue" in the original, *to do* or *to act*, that is, to do the things just spoken of, the utterance of blasphemies, "forty and two months."

to the beast. Here they have maintained their allegiance to heaven; and usurping tyrants have found no such enemies to cross their pathway, as they who have been taught to bow the knee to Jesus Christ, and acknowledge him as King of *Kings*.

The vision closes with a statement to which our especial attention is called, by inviting every one that has an ear to hear. "He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity; he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and faith of the saints." By this I understand that the people of God are warned that they are not to prevail against this usurping antichristian power by means of the sword. Their work is to witness for Christ by the truth and holy living. They are to adhere to the testimony of Jesus, and die for it, if need be, at any time. And herein are their faith and patience to be exercised. But if they would attempt to lead this wild beast captive, they shall be brought themselves into captivity. If they would attempt to destroy him with the sword, they themselves shall be destroyed by it. They are not to maintain their sacred cause by these carnal weapons of warfare. The history of the church, also, has proved the truth of the declaration. It has been hard to bear the tyrannical usurpations and persecutions of this ferocious ten-horned beast, the cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, the bonds and imprisonments, and tortures of every kind. But here is the patience of the saints; and by the grace of God their patience and faith have been equal to the dreadful trial. They have endured as seeing him who is invisible; and great as well as glorious shall be their eternal reward.

it to minor distinctions in the clergy, any more than to different kinds of magistrates under civil government. It embraces the idea of supreme dominion, not of subordinate divisions.

The same reason will show that the two horns denote the supreme, civil, and ecclesiastical power of the papacy. It has civil jurisdiction over its own dominions, the papal states, while its ecclesiastical jurisdiction extends over the universal church. These are properly horns. Their being like a lamb's, denote that they were not openly, and at first sight, the formidable horns of a ferocious wild beast, but seemingly of the mildest domestic animal. In the same way the little horn of Daniel came up at first small and unpretending. But whatever the animal might be, as judged from his horns, he was a cruel, aggressive, insatiable, bloodthirsty monster.

“And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, (or in his presence,) and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein, to worship the first beast whose deadly wound was healed. These two statements are remarkable and worthy of attention. Here are two wild beasts whose lives are in close proximity; and we might suppose that in the ferocity of their nature, they would turn upon each other, as the beasts of the forest do, or that one would flee before the other. But not so. The two-horned one exercises all the power of the one with ten, in his very presence; of course, therefore with his sanction and approbation. He has similar jurisdiction and authority. On the other hand, in return for this generous liberality, the two-horned beast uses all his influence to induce “the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.” There is a reason for describing him as the beast “whose deadly wound was healed,” instead of the beast with “ten horns;” for while his head was wounded, he had ceased to be a beast, or persecuting power. But when his wound was

institutions, they are certainly indulging hopes of the most delusive character. No such thing will ever be.

The wonders wrought by this beast, in making fire to come down from heaven in the sight of men, are symbols of the false claims of this apostacy to speak as a true prophet of the Lord, and thus to dictate to men the infallible teachings of heaven. Fire from heaven upon Elijah's sacrifice was the attestation of God to his divine mission. So does the beast work miracles, and by lying wonders establish its ecclesiastical supremacy, deceiving "them that dwell on the earth," (the Gothic inhabitants of the ten kingdoms,) and persuading them to "make an image to the beast, which had his deadly wound healed," and into which he himself would infuse the breath of life.

A variety of opinions has been entertained as to the meaning of this image. Some suppose it to be the Pope as an image of the Roman emperors in his temporal power. Others refer it to the image-worship of that church; and others to different things still.

We will notice the facts stated respecting the image, and then endeavor to identify it. An image is a copy or representation of some object—not the object itself, but something that resembles it. The beast which had his deadly wound healed was the original that sat for the portrait, or the one to which the image was made. It was made by "them that dwell on the earth," or the Gothic inhabitants and conquerors of the ten kingdoms, and at the instigation of the two-horned beast, he deceiving them thereto by his lying wonders. He also had power to give life or breath to the image, "that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast, should be killed."

The beast, whose portrait was taken, symbolized the anti-christian civil dynasties of the Roman empire. An image of it would be some other than such a civil dynasty or organ-

as having his seal placed in their foreheads, thereby marking them as his children. So the adherents of the papacy have given them the mark of the beast, which they receive "in their right hand or in their foreheads," thus designating them as the subjects of that power. There is, doubtless, a reason for specifying both the hand the forehead as the place of the mark. When placed upon the latter, it is seen at once by all, and the subject is known by his branded name. Not so, however, when placed upon the hand; there it might be long kept concealed, as, indeed, it might be on many parts of the body. But there is reason for placing it in the *right hand*, which, as a symbol, denotes that the strength and efficiency of the body is given to the beast. This may significantly point out the secret operations of that most formidable body, the Jesuits, who were the most distinguished for wearing a concealed character. The people of God never have need to carry the seal of their profession anywhere but in their *foreheads*, to be seen and read of all. They never desire to be known as anything but what they are. The adherents of the papacy, too, have their mark; but many of them carry it in their *right hand*. It is branded deep there, deep as it would be in their foreheads, but not so readily detected. It denotes a concealed character—one who can strike in the dark—it marks the *Jesuit*.

This mark was so essential for all, "both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond," "that no man might buy or sell" without it. *To buy or sell*, is to engage in the ordinary pursuits of life, and have intercourse with human society. Applying this as a symbol to the analogous department of the church, we have the fact set forth that those without the mark had no more recognized standing in the church than men in the community who were not allowed to buy or sell. In other words, they were excommunicated and delivered over to Satan. Every one will understand how this accords with facts. All who own not subjection to that power, are re-

was Lateinos. It was the *Latin* kingdom or nation. This was its most ancient name, and the one longest retained. The term Roman came into use afterwards, but never superseded the other. Rome was the capital and the seat of empire. But it was the kingdom of the Latins, and so distinguished from the Greeks, as well as others. The Latin tongue was the language of the people, and so universally designated.

The same was the name of a man, Lateinos, the first king and founder of Latium, and he who gave name to the kingdom of the Latins.

The eight letters of the same added together make the number six hundred and sixty-six, as follows: l 30, a 1, t 300, e 5, i 10, n 50, o 70, s 200. The sum of these is 666.

Finally, this is the name which belongs to the papal communion and its members. The Romish church is the *Latin church*, by which it has always been distinguished and designated in all history. It is the Latin as contrasted with the Greek, Syrian, Armenian, or other churches. Strange, too, as the fact may be, the Latin language is the one channel of all its communications. Its Bible, its worship, its mass, its prayers, its hymns, its litanies, its canons, its decretals, its bulls, are all in Latin. The Latin Vulgate is the standard text of their scriptures, preferred above the original Hebrew and Greek. So that wherever that church goes, the Latin tongue goes with it, as the mark of the beast. It is a fact of most remarkable character, to which a parallel cannot be found. It is well nigh incredible how that dead language, spoken by no living people under heaven, can yet be maintained as the only medium of worship in every nation in which that church has an existence, whether among savage Indian tribes, or Hindoos, or Celestials, or Europeans. It is, therefore, emphatically the *Latin church* in every sense of that word; and all who belong to that communion bear this name or mark of the beast.

We are informed now that the beast with horns of lamb

and mouth of dragon, causes all "both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond," to receive this mark of the beast in their right hand or their foreheads, or else delivers them over one and all, unconditionally, to damnation, as vile heretics. With such faithful accuracy and minuteness does the word of inspiration point out the Latin church as the church of the apostacy, fastening upon it its own name.

This vision also points out the close and indissoluble partnership which exists between the two and the ten-horned beasts, being bound together in a holy alliance. Nor does history belie the picture. They have both been beasts, alike in savageness of temper, though dwelling amicably together, for they have mutually helped each other. He of the two horns has ever assiduously taught all them that dwell upon the earth that they must worship his majesty the ten-horned beast, and submit passively to his heaven-derived prerogatives; for which instruction and aid, he of the ten has generously allowed the one of two to exercise all his jurisdiction and power in his very presence, and agreed to sustain him to the utmost of his ability.

SERMON XV.

Chap. 14: 1-5. And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the Mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: and they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.

THERE is no difficulty in identifying this company on Mount Sion as the true people of God, preserved from the contaminations of a corrupt and idolatrous church, although it is not so easy to fix the chronology of the event. The vision evidently has a close connection with the flight of the three angels, immediately following: the first, with the everlasting gospel to preach to the nations; the second, proclaiming the downfall of Babylon; the third, warning the worshippers of the beast and his image of the doom awaiting them. These all relate to one general subject, and by referring back to the plan of the prophecy, we shall be guided in the particular application of the symbols.

The plan of the Apocalypse, as heretofore alluded to, is to develop the rise and continuance of the great antichristian powers of the earth, both civil and ecclesiastical, to their final overthrow, and then, in a parallel line, the history of God's true church to its glorious triumph. They are both kept in sight together. Thus, in the first six seals, the rise of ecclesiastical despotism is traced out, with its usurpations and persecutions, to its final catastrophe in the great earth-

Mount Sion, whither the true tribes of Israel go up to worship. They were with the Lamb, and not wandering after the beast. The definite number of one hundred and forty and four thousand, being twelve thousand from each of the tribes, denotes probably the small but complete body of God's true children, who were found to adhere to his truth, even during the darkest period of the apostacy, when it might have seemed as if all had been lost, and none were left as the worshippers of Jehovah. This company is not the same with the one of the sixth seal standing before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palms in their hands. That was "a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues," and represents the whole church of God, gathered out of this period of tribulation, to share the glories of Christ's future kingdom. In the present vision we have a small company, a chosen few, only one hundred and forty-four thousand, marking a limited portion of that innumerable multitude ; that portion which is to be found in the earliest stages of the papal apostacy, previous to the Reformation. It includes the Waldenses, Albigenses, and others who preserved a pure gospel amid the wide prevailing apostacies of the times. The further description given of them will make this more clear.

Standing before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders, they sing a new song, which no man could learn but they of this company ; which points us to the almost universal apostacy of the church, and that these select few were the only ones preserved by the grace of God, who were able to appreciate the true spirit of the gospel, and unite ascribing their salvation to God and the Lamb. They are described as those "which were redeemed from the earth," and "from among men." The former phrase designates the inhabitants of the ten kingdoms over which the idolatry of the Romish Church prevailed. The latter term, "men,"

spread of the Reformation of the 16th century. They had "the everlasting gospel to preach." They preached it to "them that dwell on the earth," the subjects of the beast, and thence it has been proclaimed "to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people."

Applying this vision, as some do, to modern missions, it is not true that the first proclamation of the Gospel was made to the inhabitants of papal Europe. The peculiar work of missions, as of late developed in the church, has been to the heathen, while only very recently have any efforts been put forth for the evangelization of the European nations. In addition to this, these missionary efforts have been made, for the most part, by those outside of the ten kingdoms, and not within, as the symbol represents.

The proclamation of the angel, also, is suited to the Reformers, rather than to missionaries. "With a loud voice" did the former deliver their glorious message, causing it to resound from one end of Europe to the other. They called upon the worshippers of the beast and his image to "fear God and give glory to him," warning them at the same time that the hour of judgment was coming upon those who had usurped his rights and prerogatives; and urging them to "worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."

Chap. 14: 8.—And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.

THIS vision represents an advanced stage of the Reformation, when the church of Christ began to identify the Romish hierarchy as the Babylon of prophecy, and foretell her certain doom, as if it were an event already accomplished.

By Babylon, some understand the city of Rome. But it is not according to the laws of symbolic language to make

ylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath (or infuriating, inflaming wine) of her fornication." This proclamation of Babylon's fall is not intended to describe such event as now actually taking place. The present vision simply shows the progress of things in the church, and the position in which the Romish hierarchy began to stand before the people of God, as the great mystical Babylon of prophecy. Such the Reformers proclaimed it to be ; and identifying it as Babylon, they necessarily proclaimed its certain doom, as if it had already taken place.

I would here suggest the idea that the company on Mount Sion represents the portion of the true church which never had any connection with the idolatries of mystical Babylon. The description given of them would indicate this, their not being "defiled with women"—in whose "mouth was found no guile"—being "without fault," and following "the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." The Waldenses and Albigenses, with others, perhaps, were thus entirely preserved from the corruptions of Rome. Afterwards a body of men was raised up within Babylon itself, but brought out from it, who were to constitute another portion of God's elect. These are represented by the angels in their successive flight.

Chap. 14 : 9-11.—And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation ; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb : and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever : and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.

THIS vision points out a stage of sentiment in the church still further advanced, when it was openly proclaimed, that no one could be partaker in the idolatries of this apostate

church, without jeopardy to his eternal salvation. The two-horned beast had caused all to receive his mark, so that none without it might buy or sell. In other words, all were heretics, doomed to destruction, upon whom the mark of the beast was not found. But the tables began now to be turned. It was proclaimed, "If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb; and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever; and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name." The symbols here employed of drinking unmixed wine of God's wrath from the cup of his indignation—of being tormented with fire and brimstone, the smoke of their torment ascending for ever and ever—and having no rest day nor night, set forth, in the most vivid light, the fearful and eternal punishment of those upon whom the mark of the beast is found, and who are thus proved to be the loyal subjects of the papacy. I do not understand this as a declaration that no one within the papal communion can be a Christian and be saved. If there are any truly converted persons within the pale of that apostacy, as doubtless there may be, then they have not the mark of the beast upon them. It is that mark which designates them as the worshippers of the beast and his image, as acknowledging the usurping claims of these apostate powers, and making them their true subjects.

* Chap. 14: 12, 13.—Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them.

IN the preceding chapter, at the close of the description of the beast's supremacy, and power, and warfare upon the saints, there is the same declaration as in the first of these verses. It denotes that the period just described was one which would eminently try the faith and patience of God's people, and make it manifest whose they were. It would be a time for the development of exalted Christian heroism. The repetition of the same declaration at the close of this series, also, is strong confirmation that they run parallel with each other, and cover the same ground. This was one of the data which enabled me to fix the chronology of the visions just interpreted. The statement is, also, very distinct, that "here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus," informing us that those now described embrace the true church of Christ.

The declaration of verse 13 is designed, probably, to point out the fact that the church of God had now escaped the horrors and iniquities of papal purgatory, and that those who died henceforth, were blessed in a peculiar sense, as they could die with a hope full of immortality, assured of resting from their labors, when their conflicts here were ended. The arm of persecuting Rome could not reach into the other world. This doctrine of purgatory has been one of the most monstrous dogmas of the papacy, and a great source of corruption and power. It would not have been necessary, under ordinary circumstances, for a voice from heaven to declare that the death of the righteous was blessed. But now John was directed to write it, that it might be fully understood: and the reason given, which was testified to by the Spirit, was, "for they rest from their labors, and their works do follow them." Their toils and sufferings are over. Blessed, therefore, from henceforth are the dead.

be the ministry. In the first seal that ministry was represented by a rider on a white horse, with bow and crown. In the present scene we have a similar personage seated on a white cloud, with golden crown and sickle. The only difference in the two visions is, that in the last the cloud is substituted in place of the horse, and a sickle instead of the bow. In the first seal the appointed work was to win the peaceful triumphs of the cross. In this vision, it is to reap the harvest of the earth. There may be a question whether this is a harvest of wrath to God's enemies, or a joyful ingathering of the church. I am disposed to take it in the former sense, as the vintage described immediately after is evidently such; and the harvest as a symbol is so used elsewhere in the scriptures. "The daughter of Babylon is like a threshing floor, it is time to thresh her; yet a little while, and the time of her harvest shall come," Jer. 51: 33. "Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehosaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe; come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great."—Joel 3: 12, 13. Thus the harvesting of grain for the threshing floor, and the gathering of grapes for the wine press are both employed to denote a day of vengeance on God's enemies. The harvest is represented as "ripe" or dried, fully ripe. The powers of wickedness have come to their full development, and the time for the thrusting in of the sickle is come. The field where this harvest is gathered is "the earth," the Roman earth, over which the beast had dominion.

Beyond this I am not able to explain or apply the symbols of this vision. I cannot speak with any confidence as to the application of the one on the cloud to the ministry. The nature of the symbol would seem to point us to that as the fulfillment. But what conspicuous agency the ministry of the church is to have in gathering the harvest for the threshing floor of God's wrath, I am unable to say.

the same, therefore, with the battle of the great day of God Almighty, and the earthquake of the sixth seal.

The extent and depth to which blood flows from this dread wine-press of wrath, even to the horse bridles for the space of sixteen hundred furlongs, is awfully symbolic of avenging judgments, though I am unable to give the symbols a specific application. Sixteen hundred furlongs is the length both of Italy and of Judea, and the same is referred by different commentators to each. If it does refer to either, it is more probably the latter, for the wine-press is said to be "without the city," beyond the bounds of the Romish hierarchy. The prophet Ezekiel (ch. 39) describes under other symbols the same scenes, doubtless, that are here portrayed in the harvest and vintage; the slaughter of Gog and Magog upon the mountains of Judea, which was so vast that it required seven months to bury the slain of the enemy, while the shields and bucklers, the bows and arrows left upon the field furnished fuel for the inhabitants of the land for seven years, so that they cut no wood out of the forests. The strong and singular declaration is added, in immediate connection, and as the result of these judgments, "So the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord, from that day and forward." This vision brings us again to the same grand terminating point, toward which all the events of providence and prophecy converge, as to a great centre. Begin where you will in the history of the world, and travel along what pathway of events you may, you are brought without fail to this grand era of the finishing up of "the mystery of God,"—the time of glorious restitution of all things.

up of God's avenging judgments upon the persecutors of his church. When the last one, therefore, is poured out, the work is done, the time of judgment is over, and then comes the day of glorious triumph to the saints, their season of tribulation being past. These plagues then evidently precede immediately the introduction of Christ's millennial reign; and the last of them forms the judgments of the seventh trumpet.

John then beheld a great company standing upon the glassy sea before the throne, composed of those who had been preserved from the idolatries of the Romish apostacy, and had adhered to the testimony of Jesus. They were glorious conquerors, who had gotten the victory over the beast and his image; and standing upon that clear and boundless expanse, which stretched out before the throne, "as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire," they raise their lofty strains. This appearance of mingled fire with the glass was like that presented by the sea, when the rising or setting sun darts his rays across the waters, and gives the aspect of fire mingled with water. It may perhaps have been the fire of the altar, whose rays were thus reflected over this vast expanse, thus denoting the avenging judgments of God, that were now to be poured out, and which were the theme of celebration in the song of this redeemed company.

"The song of Moses" was that sung by the Israelites, when, escaped to the further shore of the Red Sea, they had witnessed the final overthrow of Pharaoh's dread host by the returning waters. It was a great deliverance to Israel, even by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and it was a dread destruction, when all the flower of Egypt's strength and pride, her king, her princes and nobles, her mighty men of war, her chariots and horses, and army, sank together as a stone in the great deep. It was a just judgment, too, from God upon their presumptuous rebellion; and upon the

farther shore did the Israelites celebrate in joyful song their glorious deliverance. It was a song both of judgment and victory. 'This, therefore, was a fitting song for those who stood upon the glassy sea, who "had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name." Long had these been in the furnace of affliction, sore as the bondage of Egypt. From that furnace they had sent up their cries to heaven. "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" But now the time had come. The vials were put into the hands of the angels, containing the plagues which were to be visited upon their haughty oppressors, and which were to effect their own final glorious deliverance. They sing, therefore, "the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty: just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee, for thy judgments are made manifest."

There is awful sublimity and grandeur in this song, sung by such a company, who had been preserved by the grace of God through the long and dark night of the church's tribulation, and in full view of those last and terrific judgments which were to descend upon their persecuting foes. Yes, it is true, that God will overthrow his enemies as with the overthrow of Sodom; and it is true, likewise, that the whole redeemed church, in full view of them all, will lift up the awfully sublime anthem, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty: *just and true* are thy ways, thou King of saints."

It seems to be intimated, also, in this song, that these last plagues visited upon the persecutors of the church, will be the means of bringing the nations of the world to the worship and acknowledgment of him as the true God, as is

said of Israel upon the overthrow of Gog and Magog, "So the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God from that day and forward." Eze. 39: 22. By the dread plagues of Egypt, and the overthrow at the Red Sea, God made himself a great and terrible name among the heathen, so that the God of the Hebrews was exalted in the eyes of all the nations, none being like unto him. So it is intimated that similar but far greater results will follow the seven last plagues. "Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: *for all nations shall come and worship before thee: for thy judgments are made manifest.*" The nations shall see thy judgments upon these thy persecuting, rebellious foes. They shall witness the glorious deliverance of thy long oppressed people; and they shall come bending at thy feet. The finishing up of these last judgments will then doubtless have a most important influence, and be the final stroke in the conversion of the nations to God, completing the work for which God had prepared the way by widespread missionary efforts.

By "the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony," from which the seven angels came out fully prepared for their work, is meant the most holy place of the sanctuary, called "the tabernacle of the testimony," because there was deposited beneath the wings of the cherubim the ark of the testimony, or God's covenant. In the temple above the one here opened, there was not the ark of the testimony, but the throne of God and the Lamb, with the holy company of worshippers. It was therefore from the very presence of the Deity, from the most holy place of the sanctuary, that the angels went forth, commissioned to execute the seven last plagues. They went forth, then, by the Divine command, and as his ministers of vengeance.

The purity and splendor of their attire denote both the spotless excellency of their characters, and the justice of the work in which they were to be engaged. It was one,

set forth the fact that these avenging judgments were for the manifestation of the Divine glory, and that there was no access to the throne of God or his mercy-seat, for any intercession to turn them aside, or stay their execution. That throne and mercy seat were enveloped with the overpowering manifestation of the Divine glory, so as to bar all approach; and this continued until the last vial was emptied of its dregs.

Such is the awfully sublime scene presented to our view, preparatory to the execution of the last plagues upon the proud and persecuting enemies of the church.

Chap. 16: 1, 2.—And I heard a great voice out of the temple, saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth. And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image.

THE great voice commanding the angels to enter upon their commissioned work, issued from the "temple," now filled with the glory of the Divine presence. It came, therefore, from the throne of God, who alone fixed the time of judgments, that they should begin. The seven angels, as before stated, are not symbols of any agencies on earth. Had they been so designed, their station would have been fixed somewhere on earth. But their position is kept above. They are, therefore, simply the conductors of the revelation, and distinguish these judgments as the vials of God's wrath.

Three points are brought to view in the first vial, which will guide us in its interpretation. It was "poured upon the earth"—it produced most painful malignant ulcers upon the human body—the ulcers were found "upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image,"—upon the supporters of the combined civil and ecclesiastical despotisms within the dominion of the beast. "The earth" is the Roman earth, the inhabitants of

to whom this idea first occurred, was Voltaire, who being weary (as he said himself) of hearing it repeated that twelve men were sufficient to establish Christianity, resolved to prove that one might be sufficient to overturn it. Full of this project, he swore, before the year 1730, to devote his life to its accomplishment, and for some time he flattered himself that he should enjoy alone the glory of destroying the Christian religion. He found, however, that associates would be necessary; and from the numerous tribe of his admirers and disciples, he chose D'Alembert and Diderot, as the most proper persons to co-operate with him in his designs. He contrived also to enlist Frederick II., king of Prussia, who became one of his most zealous coadjutors, until he found that Voltaire was waging war with the throne as well as the altar. This, indeed, was not originally Voltaire's intention. He was vain; from natural disposition an aristocrat, and an admirer of royalty. But when he found that almost every sovereign but Frederick disapproved of his impious designs, as soon as he perceived their issue, he determined to oppose all the governments on earth rather than forfeit the glory with which he flattered himself, of vanquishing Christ and his apostles in the field of controversy.

He now set himself, with his two associates, D'Alembert and Diderot, to excite universal discontent with the established order of things. For this purpose, they formed secret societies, assumed new names, and employed an enigmatical language. In their secret meetings they professed to celebrate the mysteries of *Mythra*; and their great object, as they professed to one another, was to confound the wretch, meaning Jesus Christ. Hence their secret watchword was, "Crush the wretch." The following are some of their doctrines, as found in their books expressly designed for general circulation. Sometimes standing out in their naked horror, at other times enveloped in sophistry and disguise. The Universal Cause, that God of the philosophers, of the Jews,

By degrees they got possession nearly of all the reviews and periodical publications; established a general intercourse, by means of hawkers and pedlars, with the distant provinces; and instituted an office to supply all schools with teachers; and thus did they acquire unprecedented dominion over every species of literature, over the minds of all ranks of people, and the education of youth, without giving any alarm to the world. The lovers of wit and polite literature were caught by Voltaire; the men of science were perverted, and children corrupted in the first rudiments of learning, by D'Alembert and Diderot; stronger appetites were fed by the secret club of Baron Holbach; the imaginations of the higher orders were set dangerously afloat by Montesquieu; and the multitude of all ranks was surprised, confounded, and hurried away by Rousseau. Thus was the public mind in France completely corrupted, and the way prepared for the dreadful scenes which followed.

But there is another page to the dark history of this "noisome and grievous sore."

After Voltaire had broached his system of infidel philosophy, and brought it into operation, it was taken up by the celebrated Dr. Adam Weishaupt, professor of canon law in the University of Ingolstadt, and by him perfected as a system of light or illuminism. On the first of May, 1776, he founded, among the students of the above-named University, a secret society under the name of the *Illuminati*, whose avowed object was to diffuse the light of science, these secret societies being so many radiating centres of light. But the science taught was the most atrocious infidelity, and its object the overturning of all government and religion. Freemasonry being in high repute all over Europe when Weishaupt first formed the plan of his society, he availed himself of its secrecy to introduce his new order, which rapidly spread, by the efforts of its founders and disciples, through all those countries, and found its way even to the

specious names of philosophy, light, and science, spread with such untiring industry through the European mind, that unhinged the whole framework of society, and prepared it, like a vast magazine, for an awful explosion. All the principles which hold society together in the fear of God and future retribution—regard for human law—respect for magistrates, parents, and the marriage tie—yea, in the very distinctions of virtue and vice, had been unsettled or taken away. They had been reasoned down and laughed out of the world; and when these only restraints, which God has imposed upon human selfishness and passion were all removed, what was then to hold back those fierce passions and that deep selfishness from the most unbounded excesses? God was no more feared—government was no more sacred—religion was a delusion—immortality was a lie—virtue was a name—the marriage tie was a farce—modesty was refined voluptuousness: and when men were persuaded of these things, society began to roll and heave under the long swells of that portentous storm of wrath which was soon to break, in all its desolating fury, over the earth.

In the facts thus briefly presented, it may be seen how far we are justified in applying to them this first vial of wrath. The vial was poured out “upon the earth”—on the inhabitants of the ten kingdoms, when in a state of tranquillity. It was in this very condition, when the thrones of despotism were secure and unsuspecting of danger, that the dread infection was spread through society. Within ten years from the first establishment of the Illuminati, in 1776, according to the testimony of Pres. Dwight, “they were established in great numbers through Germany, Sweden, Prussia, Poland, Austria, Holland, France, Switzerland, Italy, England, Scotland, and America. They spread with a rapidity which nothing but fact could have induced any sober mind to believe.” Nor was danger discerned until all the grand props of society had been thus secretly taken away. Even when the revolution

takes the subjects of the papacy to make the rankest atheists and infidels, so likewise does it take the strong supporters of despotism to make the most violent Jacobins. A Jacobin is only a *republican* despot. Infuse into the subjects of tyranny a hatred of tyrant rulers, without at the same time imbuing their minds with the true principles of liberty, and the rod of despotism is only *transferred*; taken from the one, and put into the hands of the many; as an ulcer is often dried up on the surface only to drive it on the vitals. If you cannot have a healthy system, by all means let the sore discharge itself on the surface—the patient can live with it there—but drive it inward, and he dies.

Thus were the adherents of the papacy and the worshippers of the beast furnished as the fit subjects for these infectious outbreaking ulcers. The mass of educated mind in the Catholic countries of Europe, with much of that which was uneducated, was essentially infidel, for the shackles of superstition over it had been broken. The thunders of the Vatican had ceased to inspire terror; while atheistical philosophy, widely disseminated, had undermined the established order of society, and awakened the jealousy and hatred of subjects towards their oppressors; so that the very worshippers of the beast, who had before admired him, and cried “Who is like unto the beast, who is able to make war with him?” now veered around to the opposite point, and became the most radical and violent Jacobins, ruling with a rod of despotism, such as had never before been wielded by human hands.

We may here, too, discern a wise and righteous Providence, that these noisome and grievous sores should break out with such virulence upon the firm supporters of civil and ecclesiastical despotism, and that they should thus bring upon themselves, as it were, their own last plagues. Who would have supposed beforehand that the enslaved, superstitious worshippers of the image, with the mark of the beast upon

them, would have furnished the fittest material for atheism and infidelity? or who imagined that those who bowed the knee before the beast, and sustained his blasphemous usurpations, would, ere long, be turned into blood-red republicans, trampling upon thrones and sceptres and crowns and madly rioting upon the blood of royalty? Yet thus it was. The pen of prophecy long foretold the pouring out of this vial of wrath upon the earth, producing "a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image, which was to be the beginning of the seven last plagues, ending in the desolation and utter sweeping away of these fabrics of wickedness from the earth.

I have dwelt longer than usual on the historical elucidation of this symbol, because the facts are of deep interest, and because I wished to verify the truth of my interpretation as clearly as possible, on account of its close connection with the vials of wrath which are to follow.

SERMON XVII.

Chap. 16: 3.—And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea, and it became as the blood of a dead man; and every living soul died in the sea.

THE sea is a large body of water within the earth, subject to violent storms and agitations, and thus as a symbol denotes some central kingdom within the symbolic earth, in a state of revolution. The vial poured upon this sea produced two effects. The waters were changed into blood as of a dead man—and all the living creatures in the sea died. The waters of the sea represent the inhabitants of this kingdom, as the earth does the inhabitants of the empire or ten kingdoms. The living creatures in the sea, therefore, would denote rulers and princes, who sustain a relation to the people analogous to that which fishes do to the waters. The waters becoming “as the blood of a dead man,” is intended, doubtless, to describe a more dreadful state of things than if they had been changed simply to blood. They were converted into black and poisonous or corrupt blood, and symbolize the vast slaughter and massacre of the inhabitants of this kingdom, while the death of every living thing in the sea denotes the extermination of those in power.

It may be queried by some, whether taking the conversion of water into blood as a symbol of bloodshed, is not adopting the literal mode of interpretation. I answer no, and for this reason. The symbol is drawn from nature, the waters of the sea representing the inhabitants of the kingdom. These waters are changed into an unnatural state or element, that of blood, and denote an analogous change passing upon the inhabitants. Their continuing in life would be their re-

Voltaire and his associates had removed every restraint upon human passion and selfishness. The political revolution continued for five years, from 1789 to 1793, not unlike other revolutions, being the ordinary conflict between despotism and popular rights, and terminating with the triumph of the latter. The king was condemned to death and executed. From this point of time the power was with the people, and now commenced the scenes of terror. You will observe, therefore, how accurate is the symbolic representation of these events. The vial was poured "*upon the sea,*" upon the kingdom in the midst of a political revolution. That sea might have been calmed and its waves stilled. But no; its waters "became as the blood of a dead man, and every living thing in the sea died." Political revolutions do not necessarily result thus. It was because of the vial of wrath that the waters were turned to blood.

I will now endeavor to confirm this prophecy by reference to a few facts.

The barbarous execution of the Queen, Marie Antoinette, followed in about six months after that of the king, and this was immediately succeeded by a decree of the National Convention, of the most infamous character, that of the violation of the tombs of St. Denis, and the profanation of the sepulchres of the kings of France. Says the historian Alison, "By a decree of the convention, these venerable asylums of departed greatness were ordered to be destroyed. . . . A furious multitude precipitated itself out of Paris; the tombs of Henry IV., of Francis I., and of Louis XII., were ransacked, and their bones scattered in the air. Even the glorious name of Turenne could not protect his grave from spoliation. His remains were almost undecayed, as when he received the fatal wound on the banks of the Lech. The bones of Charles V., the saviour of his country, were dispersed. At his feet was found the coffin of the faithful Du Guesclin, and French hands profaned the skeleton before which English

invasion had rolled back. Most of these tombs were found to be strongly secured. Much time, and no small exertion of skill and labor, were required to burst their barriers. They would have resisted for ever the decay of time or the violence of enemies; they yielded to the fury of domestic dissension. This was followed immediately by a general attack upon the monuments and remains of antiquity throughout all France. The sepulchres of the great of past times, of the barons and generals of the feudal ages, of the paladins, and of the crusaders, were involved in one undistinguished ruin. It seemed as if the glories of antiquity were forgotten, or sought to be buried in oblivion. The tomb of Du Guesclin shared the same fate as that of Louis XIV. The skulls of monarchs and heroes were tossed about like footballs by the profane multitude; like the gravediggers in Hamlet, they made a jest of the lips before which nations had trembled."

Need we wonder that the people of France were left to make that country an Aceldema, a field of blood, when they thus commenced by waging their profane warfare upon their own glorious dead? But another scene of the drama immediately succeeded.

Says Alison again:—"Having massacred the great of the present and insulted the illustrious of former ages, nothing remained to the Revolutionists but to direct their vengeance against heaven itself. Pache, Hebert, and Chaumette, the leaders of the municipality, publicly expressed their determination 'to dethrone the King of Heaven, as well as the monarchs of the earth.' To accomplish this design, they prevailed on Gobet, the apostate constitutional Bishop of Paris, to appear at the bar of the assembly, accompanied by some of the clergy of his diocese, and there abjure the Christian faith. He declared 'that no other national religion was now required but that of liberty, equality, and morality.' Many of the constitutional bishops and clergy in the convention joined in the proposition. Crowds of drunken

artisans and shameless prostitutes crowded to the bar, and trampled under their feet the sacred vases, consecrated for ages to the holiest purposes of religion. The churches were stripped of all their ornaments; their plate and valuable contents brought in heaps to the municipality and the convention, from whence they were sent to the mint to be melted down. Trampling under foot the images of our Saviour and the Virgin, they elevated, amid shouts of applause, the busts of Marat and Lepelletier, and danced around them, singing parodies on the Hallelujah, and dancing the Carmagnole."

"Shortly after a still more indecent exhibition took place before the assembly. . . . Hebert, and Chaumette, and their associates, appeared at the bar and declared 'that God did not exist, and that the worship of Reason was to be substituted in his stead.' A veiled female, arrayed in blue drapery, was brought into the assembly; and Chaumette, taking her by the hand, 'Mortals,' said he, 'cease to tremble before the powerless thunders of a God whom your fears have created. Henceforth acknowledge no divinity but Reason. I offer you its noblest and purest image; if you must have idols, sacrifice only to this.' When, letting fall the veil, he exclaimed, 'Fall before the august Senate of Freedom, oh! Veil of Reason!' At the same time, the goddess appeared personified by a celebrated beauty, the wife of Momoro, a printer, known in more than one character to most of the convention. The goddess, after being embraced by the president, was mounted on a magnificent car, and conducted, amid an immense crowd, to the cathedral of Nôtre Dame, to take the place of the deity. There she was elevated on a high altar, and received the adoration of all present, while the young women, her attendants, whose alluring looks already sufficiently indicated their profession, retired into the chapels around the choir, where every species of licentiousness and obscenity was indulged in without control.

disposing of their captives. The miserable wretches were either slain with poniards in prison, or carried out in a vessel, and drowned by wholesale in the Loire. On one occasion a hundred 'fanatical priests,' as they were termed, were taken out together, stripped of their clothes, and precipitated into the waves. . . . Women big with child ; infants, eight, nine and ten years of age, were thrown together into the stream, on the sides of which, men, armed with sabres, were placed to cut off their heads if the waves should throw them undrowned on the shore."

"On one occasion, by orders of Carrier, twenty-three of the royalists, on another twenty-four, were guillotined without any trial. The executioner remonstrated, but in vain. Among them were many children of seven or eight years of age, and seven women ; the executioner died two or three days after, with horror at what he himself had done. So great was the multitude of captives who were brought in on all sides, that the executioners, as well as the company of Marat, declared themselves exhausted with fatigue ; and a new method of disposing of them was adopted, borrowed from Nero, but improved on the plan of that tyrant. A hundred, or a hundred and fifty victims, for the most part women and children, were crowded together in a boat, with a concealed trap-door in the bottom, which was conducted into the middle of the Loire ; at a signal given, the crew leaped into another boat, the bolts were withdrawn, and the shrieking victims precipitated into the waves, amid the laughter of the company of Marat, who stood on the banks to cut down any who approached the shore. This was what Carrier called his *Republican Baptisms*. The *Republican Marriages* were, if possible, a still greater refinement of cruelty. Two persons of different sexes, bereft of every species of dress, were bound together, and after being left in torture in that situation for half an hour, thrown into the river. Such was the quantity of corpses accumulated in the Loire, that the water of that

bled to bring their fruits to the market, the shop-keepers to expose them to sale. The richest quarters of the town were deserted ; no equipages or crowds of passengers were to be seen on the streets ; the sinister words, *Propriété Nationale*, imprinted in large characters on the walls, everywhere showed how far the work of confiscation had proceeded. Passengers hesitated to address their most intimate friends on meeting : the extent of calamity had rendered men suspicious even of those they loved most. Every one assumed the coarsest dress, and the most squalid appearance ; an elegant exterior would have been the certain forerunner of destruction. At one hour only were any symptoms of animation seen : it was when the victims were conveyed to execution ; the humane fled with horror from the sight, the infuriated rushed in crowds to satiate their eyes with the sight of human agony.

“Night came, but with it no diminution of the anxiety of the people. Every family early assembled its members ; with trembling looks they gazed round the room, fearful that the very walls might harbor traitors. The sound of a foot, the stroke of a hammer, a voice in the streets, froze all hearts with horror. If a knock was heard at the door, every one, in agonized suspense, expected his fate. Unable to endure such protracted misery, numbers committed suicide. ‘Had the reign of Robespierre,’ said Freron, ‘continued longer, multitudes would have thrown themselves under the guillotine ; the first of social affections, the love of life, was already extinguished in almost every heart.’ ”

With one more quotation from Alison, I will dismiss this awful theme. “The combination of wicked men who thereafter governed France, is without parallel in the history of the world. Their power, based on the organized weight of the multitude, and the ardent co-operation of the municipalities, everywhere installed by them in the possession of power, was irresistible. All bowed the neck before this gigantic assemblage of wickedness. The revolutionary ex-

cesses daily increased, in consequence of the union which the constant dread of retribution produced among their perpetrators. There was no medium between taking a part in these atrocities, and falling a victim to them. Virtue seemed powerless; energy appeared only in the extremity of resignation; religion in the heroism with which death was endured. There was not a hope left for France, had it not been for the dissensions which, as the natural result of their wickedness, sprung up among the authors of the public calamities."

"It is impossible not to be struck in looking back on the fate of these different parties, with the singular and providential manner in which their crimes brought about their own punishment. No foreign interposition was necessary, no avenging angel was required to vindicate the justice of Divine administration. They fell the victims of their own atrocity, of the passions which they themselves had let loose, of the injustice of which they had given the first example to others. The Constitutionals overthrew the ancient monarchy, and formed a limited government; but their imprudence in raising popular ambition paved the way for the 10th of August, and speedily brought themselves to the scaffold; the Girondists established their favorite dream of a Republic, and were the first victims of the fury which it excited; the Dantonists roused the populace against the Gironde, and soon fell under the axe which they had prepared for their rivals; the Anarchists defied the power of 'Heaven itself;' but scarcely were their blasphemies uttered, when they were swept off by the partners of their bloody triumphs. One only power remained, alone, terrible, irresistible. This was the power of *Death*, wielded by a faction steeled against every feeling of humanity, dead to every principle of justice. In their iron hands, order resumed its sway from the influence of terror; obedience became universal, from the extinction of hope. Silent and unresisted, they led their victims to the scaffold, dreaded alike by the soldiers

who crouched, the people who trembled, and the victims who suffered. The history of the world has no parallel to that long night of suffering, because it has none to the guilt which preceded it; tyranny never assumed so hideous a form, because licentiousness never required so severe a punishment."

In this awful picture, the details of which might be carried out to almost any extent, we may read the truth of prophecy, and understand the force of the declaration, that the sea "became as the blood of a dead man, and every living soul died in the sea."

Chap. 16: 4.—And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood.

FOUNTAINS and rivers bear the relation of tributaries to the sea, and thus symbolize the inferior communities and nations belonging to the apocalyptic earth. France was the great central power, and the sea of Revolution upon which the second vial descended. The surrounding nations belonging to the ten kingdoms were the rivers and fountains upon which the third was poured, converting them to blood. It is not said of them that they became as the blood of a dead man, nor that every living soul in them died, but only that "they became blood." The symbol denotes the insurrections and desolating wars in which the nations of Europe were involved for a long succession of years, growing out of the French revolution. The bloodthirsty Jacobinism of France waged war not only upon its own monarchy, but sought to overturn all the thrones and fabrics of despotism in Europe. The same system of infidelity and atheism had been spread through the kingdoms there, though not to so great an extent as in France, and prepared the elements for revolution in them likewise. The French republic encouraged these agitations, and by a unanimous decree of the Assembly in

sickening horror only preparing the way for one more dreadful to come, and it seems as if humanity could not endure any more, we are ready to close the book, and exclaim, Oh! when will this night of agony be over? When will the morning dawn, and these avenging plagues of heaven cease? These, however, were not the thoughts of the angel arrayed in pure and white linen. As he drained the full goblet of wrath to its last dregs, and caused the nations to drink it, he exclaimed, "Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus." Then follows the reason—"For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets; and thou hast given them blood to drink, for they are worthy." How true is it, that God's ways are not as our ways, nor his thoughts as our thoughts! And when men would represent God as only a tender-hearted Father, and not one also of avenging judgment to his enemies, let them visit, in the page of history, these guilty nations, scathed and blasted by the hot thunderbolts of his wrath, until their very souls sicken and grow faint at the sight of human agony and blood, and they can endure no more; yea, until they see the hardened executioners in these scenes dying of horror at the deeds which their own hands have done; and then let them hear the voice of the angel exclaiming, in view of the same, "Thou art righteous, O Lord, because thou hast judged thus; for they have shed the blood of saints and prophets; and thou hast given them blood to drink, for they are worthy;" while the sublime answering response from another angel out of the altar is, "*Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous* are thy judgments."

The thoughts herein contained furnish confirmation also of the truth of our interpretation. They show that "the sea," "the rivers and fountains of waters," upon which the vials were poured, are symbols of those nations which had been the persecutors of the saints. They show likewise the character of the judgments, that it was the shedding of

power is given to his rays, the earth becomes as a furnace in which every green thing is burnt up. What the sun now is to this world, such are the ruling powers to a kingdom ; and the scorching power, as of fire, given to them, denotes that instead of administering the government for the good of the subjects, it is exercised for purposes of oppression. A hot scorching sun, therefore, is a symbol of tyrant rulers.

Some refer the fulfillment of this vial to the bloodthirsty tyranny of the republican rulers during the reign of terror. But these scenes of horror were depicted under the symbol of the sea converted into the blood of a dead man ; and it would seem inconsistent with the order and plan of the prophecy to have two vials to represent the same judgment.

This fourth vial, doubtless, finds its fulfillment in the vast and almost universal military empire of Napoleon.

The French nation had not the virtue or religion necessary to remedy the evils under which they had long been suffering from the oppression of their monarchs ; and when they undertook the work and demolished the throne, they let loose all the wildest elements of wrath to rage without restraint. The nation rejected God, and God rejected the nation. He gave them up to their own madness, to the fury of the most atrocious wickedness that was ever developed under heaven. The nation became its own dread executioner of Jehovah's wrath : and from the wild excesses and intolerable calamities of blood-red republicanism, the people were rejoiced at length to find a refuge in a gigantic military despotism, which became the terror and scourge of Europe. The hand of Providence was in this thing also. When the sun scorches the earth with burning heat, it is God that gives it such power. So Napoleon, with his towering genius and iron will, was but an instrument in the hand of God for scourging the guilty nations. He it was that raised up Napoleon and placed him as the scorching sun in the centre of that

that from burning Moscow, for disaster and suffering, stands without a parallel in the history of the world. It was not the Russian armies that prevailed to defeat him; but God fought against him with his icy morsels and the blasts of his north wind. These speedily silenced those tremendous parks of artillery which had thundered upon the fields of Marengo and Austerlitz. These scattered those invincible battalions which had marched triumphant over Europe. Before the fury of their onset, Ney, at the head of his National Guards, ever before carrying victory on their standard, was compelled to beat a dreadful retreat, glad to escape with the smallest remnant of his host. Napoleon failed here, because God had given him no commission to perform beyond the dominions of the beast. It was his territories alone that he was sent to scorch with fire, and upon them indeed did his rays fiercely glare, so that "men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which had power over these plagues." Napoleon was inspired with the most unbounded ambition, which was nothing short of erecting a vast military despotism over Europe, if not the world. Universal empire was the grand object to which he devoted his life and mighty genius. To concentrate "the world in Europe—Europe in France—France in Paris—Paris in himself," was his grand aim; and the empire which he actually reared in Europe was a vast, oppressive, centralized despotism, under which men groaned and blasphemed the God of heaven. To build it up, he desolated France through his terrible conscriptions, requiring the whole strength and flower of the nation to supply his armies. It is stated that after the wars of Napoleon there were three times the number of women in France that there were of men. The fathers, the husbands, the sons, the brothers, had fallen upon the battlefield, and thus desolated almost every household in the kingdom. Similar desolation also he carried by his wars into the other kingdoms. But this was not the evil most deeply felt.

The bitterest ingredient in the cup, to these nations, was the humiliating overthrow of their own governments, and their subjection to the hated *republican* despotism of France. It was a scorching sun to them, which they could not endure, and which finally gathered the combined powers of Europe for its overthrow.

To illustrate the above statements, I will add one fact, as narrated by Alison. After the terrible battle of Wagram, in which the Austrians were defeated, and that empire was brought as the last one at the feet of the mighty conqueror, who then stood in the very zenith of his glory; before leaving the Austrian capital, and after the treaty of peace had been concluded, "He gave orders," says the historian, "for the barbarous and unnecessary act of blowing up its fortifications. Mines had been previously constructed under the principal bastions, and the successive explosions of one after another presented one of the most sublime and moving spectacles of the whole revolutionary war. The ramparts slowly raised in the air, suddenly swelled, and bursting like so many volcanoes, scattered volumes of flame and smoke into the air; showers of stones and fragments of masonry fell on all sides; the subterranean fire ran along the mines with a smothered roar, which froze every heart with terror; one after another the bastions were heaved up and exploded, till the city was enveloped on all sides by ruins, and the rattle of the falling masses broke the awful stillness of the capital. This cruel devastation produced the most profound impression at Vienna; it exasperated the people more than could have been done by the loss of half the monarchy. These ramparts were the glory of the citizens; shaded by trees, they formed delightful public walks; they were associated with the most heart-stirring eras of their history; they had withstood all the assaults of the Turks, and been witness to the heroism of Maria Theresa. To destroy these venerable monuments of former glory, not in the fury of assault, not under the pressure

of necessity, but in cold blood, after peace had been signed, and when the invaders were preparing to withdraw, was justly felt as a wanton and unjustifiable act of military oppression. It brought the bitterness of conquest home to every man's breast; the iron had pierced into the soul of the nation; and its effects were felt by Napoleon in the hour of his adversity, with terrible bitterness."

But though thus scorched with great heat, "they repented not to give God the glory." They "blasphemed the name of God which had power over these plagues," by which is meant that they still continued to worship the beast and his image, sustaining their usurped and blasphemous claims. They had been made to feel the very bitterness of death in the infliction of these plagues, which had come upon them by means of that very power which they worshipped, yet still they continued to worship it as before, and repented not to give God the glory.

SERMON XVIII.

Chap. 16 : 10-11.—And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast, and his kingdom was full of darkness ; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven, because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.

THE beast here spoken of is undoubtedly the ten-horned secular beast, and not the two-horned ecclesiastical, the former being always denominated, by way of distinction, the beast. His “seat” is his throne, the place of his power. Upon this the vial was poured, the effect of which was to fill his kingdom with darkness. The blow, whatever it was, was struck at the throne, but the consequences to the kingdom only are described. Its being filled with darkness denotes the obscuration of its glory ; while pains of body so severe as to cause men to gnaw their tongues, represent the most excessive chagrin and mortification of mind. The former symbol, drawn from nature, is thus appropriately applied to political events ; the latter, from the human body, to the mind.

Some refer this symbol to the disasters befalling the papal power, regarding Rome as the seat of the beast, and his kingdom filled with darkness, as the diminishing of the glory and influence of that ecclesiastical power. But the papacy is not spoken of as *the beast*, and the symbols denote political rather than ecclesiastical events. We find their fulfillment with far greater accuracy in the downfall of the empire of Napoleon, and the restoration of the Bourbon dynasty to the throne of France. The sceptre and mighty sway of this great conqueror may emphatically be called “the seat” or throne

of the beast. The vial being poured upon this throne, indicates that here was the operation of the plague. We are therefore to look for some great disaster in that quarter, and find it in the one above stated.

The downfall of Napoleon is one of the most extraordinary events in the history of the world. That the empire which he reared should have fallen to pieces by its own weight upon his decease, or that a large portion of it should have been wrested from his grasp, would have been nothing strange. Indeed, we might have expected either event. But that he should have been taken from the imperial throne of Europe, from the head of the most powerful monarchy on the continent, from the midst of a nation that idolized him, and shut up a prisoner, closely guarded in a far distant island of the ocean, simply because the nations could not contend with his stupendous genius, nor in any other way be safe from his ambitious designs, is certainly one of the most remarkable of events, and least to be looked for. There was no peace or safety to the beasts of the forest while this lion was abroad. He roamed the terror of the woods. The only plan left, therefore, was to cage him. But how to accomplish it was the grand question; and it took the combined strength of the forest to do it. They had to muster every beast of the field; and when they had secured him, they dared not bargain for his liberty again on any conditions. Their only security was in transporting him beyond the bounds of the forest, and shutting him up a close prisoner in a distant island.

Upon the fall of Napoleon came the restoration of the Bourbons; nor was it by the free, voluntary action of the French nation that their ancient dynasty of kings was restored. The allied armies now held possession of Paris, and dictated what terms they pleased; and their pleasure was that the beast should be worshipped, and reinstated in his ancient possessions. This is the grand "Holy Alliance" of

ing the terrible ordeal through which the nation had passed, it continued to be the same antichristian persecuting power as in times past.

Chap. 16: 12.—And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the East might be prepared.

A COMMON interpretation of this vial is to make it refer to the decay of the Turkish empire, because the Euphrates is understood to be employed in the sixth trumpet as a symbol of that power. But there are reasons which forbid this interpretation. It seems, in the first place, to be out of connection entirely to bring in the Ottoman power at this point. All the five plagues preceding have reference to the ten kingdoms; so also has the seventh. We should hardly expect, therefore, that in the sixth vial, the scene would be abruptly changed, and our attention called off to a wholly different subject. This is presumptive evidence against the interpretation, though not positive proof.

This presumption, however, is sustained, and the evidence becomes clear in view of the fact that the river Euphrates is not employed in the sixth trumpet as a symbol of the Turkish power at all, but of restraint upon the four angels or Sultanies, which were held back from entering upon their appointed career, as Cyrus was held bound by that river before the walls of Babylon. The army of horsemen is the proper symbol of the Turks in that vision, as any one may see by turning to it.

Others have given the following interpretation. Rome being mystic Babylon, the drying of the Euphrates is the crippling of her power and resources, such as will prepare "the way of the kings of the East," that is, will embolden the nations to attack and destroy her. But this makes Babylon or Rome itself to be dried up, instead of the river, upon

had the mark of the beast or the number of his name put upon it. Where Rome has the power to enforce her decrees, no man can publish, buy, sell, or *read* any book to which the Pope has not first condescended to give his gracious sanction. While these strict defences, too, could be kept up, Babylon was secure, and might laugh at the impotent assaults of her foes. Their arrows struck harmless against her mighty walls. But the river Euphrates is being dried up; the obstacles to the entrance of light and truth are being removed, and "the way of the kings of the East" is preparing. With the Hebrews the term East had a much more extensive signification than with us, to whom its only distinction is, that it is the point of the sun's rising. But beyond this, it was to the Jews the cardinal point of the compass, to which they naturally first looked. Their temple was built toward the East, its principal entrance being in that direction. The most powerful and enlightened kingdoms of the world lay to the east of Judea, and they included them all under the general term,—sons or children of the East (Orientals), and kings of the East, comprehending not only Arabia and the lands of Moab and Ammon, but also Armenia, Assyria, Mesopotamia, Babylonia, and Chaldea. Travelers from these countries would all enter Judea from the East, and were spoken of as Orientals. These nations likewise were distinguished for their proficiency in science and learning. The Magi or wise men of the East came to worship the newborn Saviour at Jerusalem. They were eminent in the science of astrology, which was the great science of that day, holding rank above all others. The East, therefore, was looked to for wise men; and it is a fact that the pathway of science and literature and empire has ever been from that direction, so as to have passed into a proverb, "Westward the star of empire holds its way." "How say ye unto Pharaoh," says Isaiah, 19: 11, "I am the son of the wise, the son of ancient kings?" or as in the original, the son of the

himself was about to turn a republican. His dominions, however, in spite of all his utmost efforts by police, priests, and Jesuits, are deluged with the writings of the indefatigable propagandists of liberty. The embargo of thought and speech is broken up. The Euphrates is drying, and when the channel of that river is once effectually turned, the day of Babylon's doom is at hand.

It may be well, also, to mark the character of this symbol as a plague, how different it is from those which go before or that follow. There is no noisome, grievous sore ; no sea or rivers turned to blood ; no scorching sun consuming men with fire ; no kingdom filled with darkness, and men gnawing their tongues for pain ; no mighty earthquake or great hail ; but simply a great river drying up, to prepare the way for the kings of the East. This in itself might seem no great plague—but it was a dreadful blow to ancient Babylon when the channel of her Euphrates was turned ; and it will be a plague of the worst description to the mystical Babylon, when, in utter dismay, she beholds the deep waters which have flowed around her walls drying up, and an open entrance prepared for these monarchs of the East.

The interpretation here given falls in with the facts stated in the next verses, which form a part of this vial ; while they have no particular appropriateness to the Turkish power.

Chap. 16: 13-16.—And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief, Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.

THE general scope and intent of these verses are plain, though it may not be easy to verify the particular symbols. They plainly point us to a grand confederation among the

ciples, the character of which we are to determine from their parentage.

The spirit from the mouth of the dragon, or devil, is that which denies either the existence of God or the truth of revelation. Neither the beast nor the false prophet does this. But the devil boldly arms himself against the eternal throne. All the various and allied systems of infidelity, of atheism, of pantheism, which put God and revelation aside, are therefore represented by this unclean spirit from the dragon. The observers, too, of the times will see that this spirit is now abroad upon his mission; that this is one of the most gigantic forms of wickedness, which is arraying itself against the cause of Christ, slimy and loathsome as the animal to which it is likened.

From the beast, which is the combination of antichristian civil rulers, we should naturally look for some political principle; and what other one than that for which the beast has always contended, the union of church and state, or the supremacy of the state over the church?

The false prophet is the same with the two-horned beast, as is evident from ch. 19: 20, where he is described in close alliance with the beast, and their final destruction is together. The spirit, then, from the mouth of this false prophet is doubtless High Churchism, which certainly is nothing else than a *frog* from the mouth of the papacy. It is that principle which exalts *the church* above Christ, making the former the real channel of mercy and salvation to a lost race; which does not make the church to consist of those who are united to Christ, but makes those to belong to Christ who are within the (so-called) true church.

Take, now, the three systems named—that of infidelity and atheism in its varied forms; the great principle of state supremacy over the church; with high churchism in its varied manifestations—and you have the grand influences at work for evil in the world, which would unite all the divisions of

Many explain this to mean that the great conflict will come very unexpectedly, and take the world by surprise. This, however, is clearly not the import of the words of Christ. "Behold I come." The coming of such a conflict is not the coming of Christ. When he announces his coming, he means something more than some event of his providence. Beside this, it is not true that this conflict will be sudden and unlooked-for. On the contrary, it will be directly the opposite. It will be anticipated: great preparations will be made on a grand scale for it, the three unclean spirits being sent forth from the chief leaders of the host—the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet—unto all the kings of the earth and to the whole world, to gather them all together for the dread battle. The whole narrative, therefore, plainly contradicts the idea that this conflict will come on the world as a thief approaches and enters a dwelling, when all around are sleeping in quiet security, unsuspecting of danger. No, there are all the din and preparation for battle on every side, the gathering hosts eager for the shock, when the startling warning is given, "Behold I come as a thief;" not the conflict, not the victory, but I, Jesus, "Behold I come." Is it said that this language is symbolical? What, then, is Christ a symbol of?—of a great moral conflict between truth and error, or between his followers and the hosts of sin? Is he a symbol of the battle of Armageddon? No one can suppose this. Christ is not a symbol of any object. He represents himself alone; and when he here announces his own coming, he means just what the language plainly imports. The language of symbols is evidently dropped here, as it is in ch. 22: 7, 12, 20, where the same announcement is made of Christ's speedy coming; and he speaks in plain, direct terms respecting it. No one questions that the language, as found in the last chapter, refers to Christ's own coming, and not to some mere event of his providence; and what it means there, it does in the case before us. There are only two pos-

away, and the servant awaked, finds himself in his nakedness, and thus is compelled to go forth to his confusion and shame in the sight of all. "Blessed is he that watcheth," saith Christ, and "*keepeth his garments.*" When, therefore, these unclean frogs go abroad upon their mission, we may be assured that the coming of the Son of Man is nigh at hand, even at the doors.

Chap. 16: 17-21.—And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.

THE air is the region of thunder, lightning, and storms, the region of the wild battling of the elements. It is one also of vast extent, not confined to a given locality, but embracing the earth. The vial then poured into the air denotes that the mighty elements of the world, civil, ecclesiastical, and moral, are to be set in motion, agitating society to its deepest foundations. The plague is in the air, and therefore to be universal. When this vial was poured out, a great voice came "out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done." All is now fulfilled; the work of wrath is finished; the seven plagues are complete. "It is done." The description of the plague follows, but follows only *as a description*. As actually accomplished, it preceded that great voice, which was uttered in view of the thing already brought to pass.

The first effects of the vial poured into the air "were voices, and thunders, and lightnings," symbols of violent agitations in the mental and moral world, and finding expres-

sion in the utterance of vehement thoughts and the outbursts of violent passion, like the vivid glare of lightning and the deep rolling thunder. The great moral elements of the world are in motion; masses of men, like portentous clouds, are surging along the face of society, their bosoms charged with mighty electric thought, and the wild storm is gathering fast.

Then succeeds the earthquake, "such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great;" and mighty indeed it was, when by it the great city was divided into three parts—the cities of the nations fell—every island fled away, and the mountains were no more found. Such an earthquake as this certainly never was known since men were upon earth, one of such vast extent and producing such terrible devastation.

An earthquake is a symbol of political revolution, which here follows upon those deep agitations of thought and feeling which, in the commencement of this vial, began to affect the minds of men, and were symbolized by the voices, and thunders, and lightnings.

"The great city" is the Romish hierarchy, which is split into three fragments, as if a city had thus been divided by the deep and broad fissures of an earthquake. The boasted unity of that apostate church, in which she has so gloried, is to be proved a lie. This, of course, is not to be a geographical division, but one springing from the mighty conflict of elements within her own bosom. And that will be a fearful revolution which shall thus rend that gigantic fabric, and divide it by chasms which cannot be closed or filled up.

"The cities of the nations" are the nationalized church establishments. These are "the cities" which the nations have built as their pride and glory, but which are all to crumble and fall beneath the treadings of this mighty earthquake. "The nations" referred to are probably those without the bounds of the great mystical Babylon. All the Pro

testant establishments, therefore, with the Greek, Armenian, Russian, and other churches, will sink together, not a city being left standing among the nations, while "the great city" itself shall present unmistakable marks of the heavings of the earthquake. This, however, is not her final doom. It were a small judgment for her to be merely rent asunder. She is now to come "in remembrance before God to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath." Those are words of solemn and awful import. It is solemn often for things to come up in human remembrance, and circumstances may sometimes invest such remembrance with fearful terror. But when God remembers great Babylon with all her damning wickedness, and the vengeance she has meted out to his martyred saints, we need not be surprised to see her take at his hand "the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath."

"And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found." Islands and mountains, being prominent and fixed objects upon the earth's surface, represent political states and political organizations, the civil fabrics of society, which, in the dread convulsions of this period, are utterly swept away so as to be no more found. ●

If any one is startled at such a thought, and queries whether such events can take place, let him recollect what is said of this earthquake at the outset, being "a great earthquake, *such as was not seen since men were upon the earth*, so mighty an earthquake, and so great," burying all the cities of the nations in one common ruin, sinking every island in the deep, and carrying away the mountains, so that they cannot be found. Yes, times are to come such as men have never seen upon earth. Revolutions are to come such as society has never experienced. "The great day of God Almighty" is yet to come.

The symbols employed on the one hand, cities taken from human life, and on the other, islands and mountains drawn

cities, and the removal of mountains and islands, men continue blasphemers to the last, rejecting the dominion of Christ, and clinging to their idols.

This seventh vial is the closing up of the grand series of God's judgments upon the persecutors and enemies of the church, for in these seven last plagues "is filled up the wrath of God." The seventh, therefore, is the finishing stroke. It is general, dreadful, final, sweeping utterly away the civil and ecclesiastical despotisms of earth, which have so long arrayed themselves against the cause of God, and thus removing every obstacle to the setting up of Christ's glorious kingdom. This last vial is the same with the vintage, when the grapes are trodden in the great wine-press of God's wrath. It is the same with the great battle of Armageddon, for which the unclean spirits have assembled all the enemies of God, and the hosts of sin; and the same, too, with the earthquake of the sixth seal, the close resemblance of which to the seventh vial will be seen at a glance. And well may the enemies of God say, in this dread day of avenging judgment, to the rocks and mountains, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?"—Ch. 6: 16, 17.

or biographical, thus finishing up the history of that period, so that there is no necessity to go over it again. Taking for granted that this was the plan of the Revelation, the commentators have been under the necessity of considering portions of it as digressions, parentheses, or *épisodes*, for they could not by any possibility make it all a continuous history. When, however, we discern that the above is not the plan of the prophecy, but that the history is given by topics in parallel series, we see at once that these supposed digressions fall in as parts of a regular and perfect arrangement. Accordingly, then, after the seven last plagues had been unfolded, which were judgments both upon the civil and ecclesiastical powers, involving them both in ruin, the narrative returns and gives us a more particular account of the judgment of the latter, or the overthrow of great Babylon, as distinguished from the former. This is distinctly stated by one of the seven angels to be the object of the present vision.

The Romish church is described in the Apocalypse, under four different symbols—the two-horned beast, the false prophet, the great whore, and Babylon; while the true church of Christ is also represented under an equal or greater number, the one hundred and forty and four thousand of the twelve tribes sealed, the two witnesses, the woman in the wilderness, a virgin bride, and the new Jerusalem. In the present chapter the great whore and Babylon are identified as the same. “And the woman which thou sawest is that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth,” v. 18. As a virgin bride arrayed in pure and white linen well represents the glorious millennial church, so does a drunken harlot fitly symbolize the idolatrous, corrupt church of Rome. With this vile prostitute “the kings of the earth have committed fornication;” they have encouraged her in her corruption and idolatries, and sustained her in her usurpations over the church of Christ. “And the inhabitants of the earth have

as the red dragon. What the color designates, I do not know.

The appearance of the woman was of the most gorgeous character, nor are we to suppose the contrary because she was such an infamous prostitute. She may have been all that, while her appearance was such as to bewitch her admirers and votaries. She was arrayed most superbly in robes of purple and scarlet, even in regal splendor; and to these were added the most costly profusion of gold and diamonds. All that wealth and skill could do in magnificence of attire was bestowed upon her to set forth her charms. The "golden cup in her hand" was, as to richness, in harmony with her dress, and as to contents, with her character; for it was "full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication." The word "abomination" conveys the idea of uncleanness in the Jewish sense, and especially of impure idol-worship. It means, therefore, detestable impurities. This cup, then, was the symbol of her atrocious wickedness and idolatries.

Her name was written on her forehead, not, indeed, by herself or her adherents, but by him who drew this symbolic picture. In the Greek, the word "Mystery" is not reckoned as one of these names, as in our translation, but is separated by a pause, and stands in apposition with the words preceding. The meaning is as follows. And upon her forehead was a name written, which is a mystery. *Babylon the great. The mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth.* The pen of inspiration brands her as the great mystical Babylon, the centre of earth's idolatry. There are other harlots, or corrupt churches, in the world beside her, and other detestable impurities and idolatries. But she is the *mother* of them all. They are all children by the side of her. Some honor her, and in deep veneration call her *our holy mother church*. God brands her as the *mother of harlots and abominations of the earth*.

But this was not all. She was a "*drunken*" harlot; and drunken with what, think you? With wine? No. That were a small sin for her. But "drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus." She was therefore a bloody, relentless persecutor. Some would feign persuade us that Rome never persecutes. But with the picture of this drunken harlot before our eyes, we shall be hardly convinced on that point.

Here, then, we have the wondrous portrait drawn of the great Romish apostacy, delineated in graphic lines. A woman in gorgeous attire of surpassing richness, designed and calculated to captivate every beholder. She was no common harlot, but a queen among them—one with whom the kings of the earth might commit fornication. In this splendiddness of array is doubtless set forth the gorgeous ceremonial of that church, with the charms of its unity, its infallibility, its apostolical succession, and all that outward pomp which attracts and captivates so many. But with all her scarlet, and purple, and gold and jewels, she is a vile, drunken prostitute, of the most loathsome character.

When John beheld this vision, he wondered with great admiration; he was filled with utter astonishment. Nor is he the only one who has wondered in looking upon this symbolic woman.

Chap. 17 : 7-14.—And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. The beast that thou sawest, was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, (whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world,) when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition. And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.

THE angel promises to relieve the wondering mind of the apostle, and explain "the mystery of the woman, and the beast that carrieth her." This use of the word "mystery" by the angel, as applied to the woman, confirms what was said above, that this was not one of her names, but that they, with herself, were a mystery.

This beast is the same as the one described in chapter 13, where one of its heads was wounded, as it were, to death. Here it is represented as "the beast that was, and is not, and yet is." Both these were explained as referring to the accession of a line of Christian emperors, and it is not necessary to add anything further at this time.

This is the beast that shall "go into perdition." This is the last of the great empires that shall exist previous to the setting up of Christ's glorious kingdom, and the one that shall be overtaken with destruction at that time. The persecuting civil powers of the earth shall "go into perdition" under the form of this beast with seven heads and ten horns.

There is some little difficulty in explaining these words. "The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth, and there are seven kings." The more obvious meaning is that the seven heads represent seven mountains, and also seven kings. But this, probably, is not the idea intended. The heads of a beast are not the proper symbol of mountains. The fact, also, that the woman is represented as sitting upon these mountains, shows that they are to be taken as a symbol, and not the object symbolized. They are then the same as the heads, and denote the seven kings, or seven different governments under which the Roman empire subsisted. The heads of beasts and mountains are both employed as symbols of government.

We have described six of these heads before, but have not identified the seventh and last. On this point there have been various opinions; but the one presented by Faber is the most satisfactory, and most accurately meets the requisitions of the symbols. The first thing stated of this seventh head,

was coined, and justice was administered, and the election of popes was examined and confirmed by his authority—except an original and self-inherent claim of sovereignty, there was not any prerogative remaining which the title of emperor could add to the Patrician of Rome.” This is decisive testimony to the fact that all the power of sovereignty resided in Charlemagne as the Patrician of Rome, and that this, therefore, was a proper head to be ranked with the six which had preceded it.

But this head soon passed away, and an eighth arose, when Charlemagne was crowned Emperor of Rome, and thus revived the new empire of the West. This eighth head, however, was “of the seven,” for it was the same as the sixth, both being imperial—the first being in the Augustan line, and the other in the Carlovingian, and separated from each other by the seventh or Patriciate head. In one sense, there were eight heads, and in another only seven, for two of them were alike, so that what would have been an eighth was of the seven. This last imperial head has continued to the present time in a line of princes, which has borne the title of Emperors of Rome. For the most part, it has been held by one of the heads of the German States, although not exclusively confined to them, the power of choice residing in seven electors. The following note from the work of Faber will illustrate this point. “From the days of Charlemagne, the emperor has always claimed and has always been allowed precedence over every one of the ten horns; and as such, he has been invariably considered as the head of the great European commonwealth.” This point, however, is best decided by a professed writer on heraldry. In his last chapter on the precedency of kings and commonwealths, Sir George Makenzie has the following observations:—“Amongst those who are supreme, kings have the preference from the commonwealths; and amongst kings, the emperor is allowed the first place by the famous ceremonial of Rome, as succeeding

By their waging "war with the Lamb," and being overcome by him, is doubtless intended the gathering together for the battle of the great day of God Almighty, when they shall be overthrown as by the slaughter of Armageddon. The persecutions of the saints by these civil powers can hardly be intended here, otherwise it would have been so stated. It is said of this same beast, ch. 13 : 7, "It was given unto him to make war with the saints and to overcome them," which is to be fulfilled in the death of the witnesses. But in the present instance the statement is, "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall *overcome them*, for he is the Lord of lords, and King of kings, and they that are with him are called and chosen and faithful." The Lamb is thus distinguished in the passage itself from his people, and he it is that obtains the final victory over these powers.

Chap. 17: 15-18.—And he said unto me, The waters which thou sawest where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfill his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.

It may be well to notice in this chapter how many of the symbols are interpreted by the angel, and following the principle of analogy which we have adopted. Those taken from nature all represent political affairs, and those from human life ecclesiastical, while the Lamb is spoken of in his own person as the Lord of lords and the King of kings.

The "peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues," symbolized by "the waters," are the vast and extended communities in different portions of the earth, which are in subjection to the Romish church. The ten kingdoms are the seat of her power, and then she rides in state upon the beast, being in alliance with the civil power; but she sitteth also "on many waters." Her subjects are in other lands.

But there is not always to be cordiality and peace between the horns and this woman. She is at length to be cast off by them, as an old, wrinkled, haggard prostitute is cast off by her lovers. This is a result which God ordinarily brings about at last in all confederacies of wickedness. There is no principle of union in selfishness; and though the beast carried the whore, and the horns were at first all of one mind to give her protection and support, yet at the last their love shall be turned to hatred; they shall strip her naked, and treat her with the utmost indignity. This prophecy is now being fulfilled. The European kingdoms stand at the present time in a very different position to the Romish hierarchy from what they once did. Formerly they trembled at her nod, and were quick to do her bidding. They acknowledged the authority of her usurped claims, and humbly bowed at her feet, glad to receive her benediction and smiles. She was arrayed in purple and scarlet and gold and jewels, and they admired and adored her. But the ardor of their love has long since abated, and it is rapidly turning to hate. She is beginning to find herself forsaken and desolate, and is ready to sue for lovers. The nations are casting off her authority and spurning her imperious claims. Thus is she made "desolate and naked." She is no more the splendidly purpled and jeweled woman that she was. Not only, too, are they stripping her of her robes and ornaments, but they are eating her very flesh, by which is intended the drying up of her resources and revenues, and the confiscation of the wealth of her churches and monasteries. Once they delighted to enrich her, and no amount of wealth was too great to confer upon her. But now they hesitate as little to rob and spoil her. Wherever the republican armies penetrated in the papal states, they made her a prey. Their hatred burned toward ecclesiastical as well as civil despotism. The Pope himself was a prisoner in the hands of Napoleon, and but a few months since the French armies were battering down the

walls of Rome. Nor is this the end. This hatred is to increase yet more and more, until "they burn her with fire." What definitely is intended by this burning, I do not know. It is not literal burning, any more than it is literal eating of her flesh. But it will be something as painful and terrible to that apostate power, as consuming fire to the living sinews.

This, too, is a bitter end for great Babylon to come to, and worthy of being noted. She is not to be overthrown by Protestantism, or weakened by the withdrawal of religious persons from her communion. But her companions in iniquity, who have committed fornication with her, are to be her tormentors. These kings, with whom she has been in alliance, are to cast her contemptuously off, make her desolate and naked—eat her flesh and burn her with fire. The thing is of God. He "hath put in their hearts to fulfill his will," and though they know it not, nor think so, yet they are accomplishing his own purposes. They are as the iron rod in his hand, which he will employ to chastise this corrupt apostacy.

To prepare the way for the announcement of great Babylon's doom, which follows, the chapter closes with the statement of the angel, "And the woman which thou sawest is that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth."

scending to earth would lead us to suppose that he symbolizes some agencies among men. Whether these have already appeared, I am not able certainly to decide. More probably they have. It has been proclaimed upon the housetops by the ministry of the Protestant churches since the Reformation, that Rome is the great Babylon of prophecy, and that her doom is fixed. Whether it will be proclaimed with any more clearness or emphasis by those to come, is questionable. The proclamation of her doom is made as if it had already taken place. "Babylon is fallen, is fallen," although the event was still in the future. The same proclamation was made by the reformers of the sixteenth century.—Ch. 14 : 8. But in neither case is there any symbol representing the actual overthrow of the city.

The description of Babylon, as "become the habitation of devils," &c., refers not to the corruption and wickedness of the Romish church, but her utter desolation, being taken from the description of ancient Babylon's destruction, by Isaiah. "And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, and the beauty of Chaldee's excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrha. It shall never be inhabited; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation; neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there; but the wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there, and the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces; and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged."—Isa. 13 : 19–22. So also shall mystical Babylon fall, and become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. Her desolation shall be complete.

That this language refers to her destruction, and not her corruption, is shown also in the words following, which give

pale. As Babylon is described above as already fallen, though the catastrophe was yet to come, so the command from heaven to God's children to come out of her, is but the forcible statement of the fact that such had abandoned her, and that the way therefore was prepared for her speedy judgment. "Come out of her, my people," is heaven's attestation that she is no more the church of Christ, but a vile harlot utterly accursed and rejected of God.

The punishment was to be meted out according to two standards of measurement. The first was the reward that she had rendered to the saints. She was to receive double of this. "Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double," and terrible will be the cup of vengeance which she shall thus doubly drain. The other standard is the manner in which "she hath glorified herself and lived deliciously;" and as she hath exalted herself to heaven, so shall she be brought down to hell. No glory has been too great for her to put upon her head; no claims too arrogant and impious for her to make. He has opposed and exalted himself "above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." As God's vicegerent upon earth, she hath claimed all power and authority and infallibility, holding the keys of heaven and hell, and ruling with supreme, unlimited sway. Her iniquities have reached unto heaven, and deliciously, indeed, in her wantonness and pride, hath she lived. But even so now shall be her torment and sorrow.

Yet she sees not her approaching desolation. In the pride of her heart, she is congratulating herself upon her power and continuance, and the glorious prospects opening before her. "I sit a queen" on the pinnacle of power, supreme over all. "I am no widow;" I am not desolate and afflicted, as one who hath lost her husband. No! I am no widow, "and shall

Then, follows a description of the impression which her dreadful doom will make upon the minds of men, and how they will contemplate her fall.

Chap. 18: 9, 10.—And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas ! that great city Babylon, that mighty city ! for in one hour is thy judgment come.

FIRST is the lamentation of the kings of the earth, who have sustained her impious usurpations and abominable idolatries.

Two or three facts may be noticed here. One is, that the destruction of Babylon does not come from their hands. In the preceding chapter, it is said of these kings, which are the ten horns, that they “shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.” This, however, is not her final destruction, which is not inflicted by their hands. They are here represented as witnesses of her doom, and lamenting for her.

Another fact is, their inability to render her any assistance, indicated in their standing afar off, as silent spectators of her burning. The symbol is that of the conflagration of a mighty city, wrapped in universal flame, which bids defiance to all attempt at extinguishing, while the spectators, driven back by the fierce heat, stand looking on in silent despair, their only cry, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon !

Perhaps, also, another fact is indicated, which is their dread of a similar doom ; “standing afar off *for the fear of her torment.*” They not only lament her destruction, but fear also her torment. They tremble for themselves. Babylon is overthrown in the mighty earthquake under the seventh vial, when the whole civil and ecclesiastical world is in a state of fearful convulsion, and a dread conflict is going

on between the powers of despotism and the oppressed subjects of tyranny. Revolution is rolling through the empires like the shock of an earthquake, burying cities in ruins, sweeping away mountains and islands. In the midst of these movements, the Romish hierarchy falls overthrown by her own subjects, while the kings of the earth stand afar off for the fear of her torment, trembling at the waves which have engulfed that great city, and which are dashing their angry surges around their crumbling thrones.

It is perhaps needless to remark that this burning of Babylon is not a literal burning of the city of Rome. Babylon is not a symbol of Rome, but the Romish hierarchy. The burning, therefore, must be symbolical.

Chap. 18 : 11-17—And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her ; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more : the merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, and cinnamon, and odors, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men. And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all. The merchants of these things which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off, for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, and saying, Alas, alas ! that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls ! For in one hour so great riches is come to naught. And every ship-master, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off.

THE symbol of Babylon as a great city, the grand metropolis of the world, and the mart of earth's commerce, is here fully carried out. It was a superb city, there being no end to its luxuries and magnificence. Everything that could minister to the appetite, and gratify the taste, and feed the pride of the human soul, was here to be found in profusion. You could buy anything that your soul lusted after, all that was dainty and goodly. It was a great city—a magnificent

mart of commerce—her merchants, the princes of the earth, made rich by the abundance of her wealth.

By these merchants are intended the various ecclesiastics and dignitaries of the Romish church, from the highest to the lowest, who have been the great traders in this spiritual Babylon, and carried on its infamous traffic. No wonder, too, that they have grown rich; for theirs has been a commerce which has never failed, in which there has been no revulsions, no stoppage, no bankruptcy. The trade in which indulgences, dispensations, absolutions, masses, sins, and souls of men, are the great wholesale articles of merchandise, will always prosper while it lasts, and finds customers. Men may not have money to buy bread for their famishing bodies; but they will find enough to buy the pardon of their sins, and their souls out of purgatory. Babylon is the grand centre of commerce, lying on the great thoroughfare to hell, and the souls of men are the staple of its merchandise. The popes, and cardinals, and bishops, and archbishops, and priests, and friars, and jesuits, with all the rest of the brood, are its infamous merchants, carrying on their stupendous frauds upon a deluded multitude.

But they shall behold her burning. They shall see her wrapt in one vast conflagration, and “shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing.” Well may they weep, for their trade is ruined, their merchandise is destroyed, their city is no more.

Chap. 18: 17-19.—For in one hour so great riches have come to naught. And every ship-master, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, and cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city! And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas! that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate.

By these ship-masters, sailors, and foreign traders, I sup-

pose, are intended the ecclesiastics of the earth in other nations, beyond the ten kingdoms. The seat of this hierarchy is in Europe, where it is in alliance with the beast. There the woman rides in state. But she sitteth, also, on many waters. Distant people acknowledge her sway. This great city, therefore, not only has her princely merchants at home, who live deliciously with her, but likewise her foreign traders, her sailors, and ship-masters. These are her ecclesiastics abroad; and they shall cry when they see the smoke of her burning, "saying, Alas, alas, that great city!

Chap. 18: 20.—Rejoice over her, thou heaven and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.

AMONG the kings of the earth who had committed fornication with her, and the merchants which were made rich by her, and the ship-masters and sailors who had amassed wealth by her trade, there was nothing but weeping, and lamentation, and fear. And their cry was, "Alas, that great city." But lo, another voice breaks upon our ear from above, "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her." Yes, all heaven will rejoice, and the church be glad, when the smoke of Babylon's burning shall ascend. It is for this that the martyrs of Jesus have long cried, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" By and by the answer will come, "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God *hath avenged* you on *her*."

It may be worthy of observation to note among the classes enumerated which lament the fall of Babylon, what ones, also, are left out. It is the kings, the merchants, and the traders who bewail for her. But where are the subjects, or

those who buy the merchandise? Where their cry of wailing? Nothing is heard of it. This confirms the idea already suggested, that it is through their instrumentality that the work of destruction is accomplished.

Chap. 18 : 21-24.—And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great mill-stone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a mill-stone shall be heard no more at all in thee; and the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.

THE symbol employed here does not describe the destruction of Babylon as an actual occurrence, but only its suddenness, its completeness, and the violence with which it shall be brought about, which are strikingly represented by a mill-stone violently cast into the sea from a great height, and instantly sinking to the bottom. “Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.” An arm shall be stretched forth that shall suddenly hurl it from its seat, and it shall pass away for ever. It may be that “the sea,” into which this stone was cast, may stand as a symbol of the nations in the midst of mighty revolutions, and that it is in the midst of these that Babylon shall not merely fall, but be thrown down with terrific violence.

Then follows a series of symbols designed to show the completeness of Babylon’s desolation. Like a deserted city, the stillness and gloom of death shall reign through all her streets and palaces; not a sign of life shall be visible. No music shall be heard—no craftsman anywhere found—not even the sound of a mill-stone shall strike the ear. The light of a candle shall not be seen—nor the voice of the bride-

groom or bride heard any more. All shall be silence and desolation.

The righteousness of this doom is shown in two reasons which are added. "For thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived." "And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth." An awful treasure indeed to be brought to light. Yet the blood of the saints and prophets was the precious spoil which she had laid up for ages, and which was now found within her to bear witness to her wickedness and cruelty. But this was not all. She was the great sorceress, which had made the nations to drink of the inflaming wine of her fornications, and thus seduced them to her adulteries:—"for thy merchants were the great men of the earth." This confirms the interpretation we gave of these merchants. They were the ones who had the management of the sorceries and deceived the nations, and also the great ones of the earth, both which facts meet most strikingly in the dignitaries and ecclesiastics of the Romish church. There have been none greater than the popes, cardinals, archbishops, bishops, priests, and other rulers of that great city, and these are the merchants who have carried on their accursed trade with the deceived nations.

Chap. 19: 1-10. And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia: Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And again they said Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia. And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for

the white linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage-supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God. And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he saith unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

THE scene described here is laid in heaven, and, like that of the seventh trumpet (ch. 11: 15-19), represents the joy of that upper world in view of the final overthrow of Babylon, and the consequent introduction of Christ's glorious reign. The vision, therefore, does not present to us any events as transpiring on earth, but only the sentiment of heaven in view of those which are to be. In the preceding chapter we had the lamentations of the kings, and merchants, and shipmasters, and sailors, over the burning of the great city, in the midst of which came a call for heaven, and holy apostles, and prophets, to rejoice. In this vision now we hear those thundering shouts of joy echoing round the universe, in striking contrast with that wailing cry of war. The united voice of a great multitude arose, "saying, Alleluia, Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God." The ground of this rejoicing and praise was the righteous judgments which had overtaken the great sorceress of the earth, and the avenging of the blood of the saints at her hand. And yet again arose their shout of Alleluia, while "her smoke rose up for ever and ever." The rising of smoke is indication of the continuance of the fire. Her smoke, therefore, "rising for ever and ever," is the symbol of her eternal destruction. Yet with it arose the eternal song of Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia for ever.

This shout of joy, which was probably from the angelic throng, was re-echoed by the four and twenty elders, and the four beasts, who, falling down before the throne, said, "Amen, Alleluia." From them, as the redeemed company, burst forth the hearty response, Yes, even so, Alleluia, for ever. Then came a voice from the throne, calling upon all

the servants of God, both small and great, to unite together, on this occasion, in one grand and sacred song of praise, constituting the sublime chorus of the universe, which now fell upon the ear of the entranced apostle, "as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife (or bride) hath made herself ready." Oh! was not here a response to that call, "Rejoice over her then heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets." Never did the universe echo to such universal rapturous sounds of joy as arose from these mighty alleluias.

The marriage of the Lamb, which is one of the grand themes of joy on this occasion, and the principal one, evidently, takes place immediately upon the overthrow of Babylon, and the destruction of the other antichristian powers. It is the next grand event which succeeds in the stupendous drama. It represents, therefore, the public adoption and vindication of the people of God, as the true church of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the enthroning of her in the earth, being now presented to Christ "a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing." The long period of tribulation and sorrow preceding this event, may be regarded as the time of the church's espousals. She was betrothed to Christ, and she knew it. She had the precious pledge of those espousals. Yet that was, as it were, a secret matter between Christ and his betrothed. By a scorning, persecuting world, she was trampled under foot, and hated, and slandered, while a vile, drunken harlot, arrayed in splendid purple, and scarlet, and gold, and jewels, had usurped her place, and enthroned herself as the queen and mistress of the world, claiming the homage of and the right to reign over all. Jesus Christ suffered this until all his great purposes were fulfilled, and then hurled the infamous wretch to the deep

damnation of hell ; upon which all heaven sent up the united shout of Alleluia, alleluia for ever ! And now is come the marriage of the Lamb, the marriage of his long betrothed. The bride is made ready, arrayed in fine linen, clean and white. She is publicly to be espoused to Christ. He is to vindicate her as his own beloved bride, and united to him in glorious espousals, she is to reign with him in triumph and joy.

A marriage scene is one of the most joyful that we witness on earth, and among eastern nations especially was celebrated with great pomp and magnificence, the joy and splendor of the occasion being enhanced according to the rank and wealth of the parties. But earth has never imagined such an occasion as that of the marriage of *the Lamb* ; when Christ shall take his beloved church, which he has redeemed to himself, and espouse her as his own glorious bride, arrayed in fine linen, clean and white. Well may the shout be raised then from all above and below, “ Alleluia ; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.”

The supper, or feast, is to follow this joyful marriage ; denoting the glory and happiness of the church during the reign of Christ, which is to follow. It is the happy feast which is to follow the espousals ; and “ blessed,” says the pen of inspiration itself, “ Blessed are they which are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.”

The narration of these scenes is closed with the emphatic declaration, “ These are the true sayings of God.” Almost too glorious to be believed, yet they are no dreams of the fancy. They are true ; yea, “ the true sayings of God.”

John, on beholding these stupendous visions of glory, and hearing the loud and universal alleluias, like mighty thunders rolling round the universe, seems to have been, as it were, carried away, so that he fell at the feet of the angel to

worship. It is uncertain what the motives or impressions were which prompted to this. But his soul was full, full to overflowing, and he could not but adore and worship. The angel interrupted the homage paid to him by the declaration, that he himself also was a fellow-servant of Christ, and one of the brethren which had the testimony of Jesus, "for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." The idea is, I am a fellow-servant of Christ with you, and we both have his testimony. You bear witness to him now in this present generation; I bear witness to those who are to come. You witness now of his death and resurrection; I tell of his future glory and triumphs. We are both, therefore, engaged in the same work. The testimony of Jesus and the spirit of prophecy are the same. To God, therefore, alone we must both bow.

SERMON XXI.

Chap. 19 : 11-16.—And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse ; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns ; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood ; and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations : and he shall rule them with a rod of iron : and he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

THE fall of great Babylon is the grand crisis in the moral history of the world, the mighty event which determines its destiny, and introduces a new era. Over her fall, as the utter defeat of all the hopes and designs of the wicked, we have had already described their loud wailing lamentations, and on the other hand, the fervent rejoicings of heaven and all the holy universe of God.

The destruction of Babylon, however, and the introduction of the millennial reign are both to be described yet, as actual events under their appropriate symbols, which is done in the remainder of this, and the beginning of the following chapters. The overthrow of Babylon takes place in the battle of the great day of God Almighty, for which the three unclean spirits went forth to make preparation, by a grand confederacy of all the powers of evil.

The person described in the present vision is Christ, beyond all mistake, the same who appeared to John in the beginning. Then he stood in the midst of the golden candlesticks, the defence of his churches through their fiery trials, and holding the stars in his right hand. But now, from the

opened heavens he rode the white horse of victory, his mission, "to judge and make war."

The description of his person, with his names and attributes, clearly proclaims him the Son of God. He is the "Faithful and True," the title by which he made himself known to the churches of Philadelphia and Laodicea. "His eyes as a flame of fire" denotes his omniscience, and as the searcher of hearts, he made himself known to the church of Thyatira. His "many crowns," were the symbols of his supreme sovereignty. "And he had a name written, which no man knew but he himself." He had names by which he might be known to mortals, and through which he could reveal himself. But he had also a name which no created intelligence could understand, which was known only to himself. That name is not given: it could not be. If human thought could not conceive it, human language could not convey it. Under this incomprehensible name is set forth the supreme Deity of Jesus Christ. We may know him as the Faithful and True witness, as the Word of God, as the King of kings, and the Lord of lords; but there is one name which we may not know. His "vesture dipped in blood," refers not to the blood of atonement, but the blood of his enemies sprinkled upon his raiment, in treading the wine-press of God's wrath, and denotes that he was now going forth to the dread work of vengeance. I shall have occasion to refer more fully to this hereafter. "His name is called the Word of God," a name applied in scripture only to Jesus Christ. The armies of heaven following, were doubtless the redeemed of earth, being "clothed in fine linen, clean and white," in token of their justification. They were arrayed in the same manner as Christ's bride, and seated on white horses, the symbols of victory. The "sharp sword" proceeding from his mouth, is his word or truth, with which he will smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; and he treadeth the wine-press of the fierce-

ness and wrath of God." He therefore is the treader of the grapes of the vintage, who hath his vesture dipped in blood. "And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, *King of kings and Lord of lords*,"—a name which no created holy intelligence dare assume, and for the impious assumption of which, by the Man of Sin, Christ himself was now to appear clothed for judgment. With this description we can have no doubt that Jesus Christ is the person here presented.

Let it be noticed too, that this is the only place in the whole Apocalypse where the coming or appearance of Christ is described. Several of the commentators, indeed, find him under the symbols of the rainbow angel—the child born of the woman—the angel in the white cloud, and perhaps others also. But we have not so understood these at all. We shall find also in the description of the final judgment, under the symbol of the great white throne, that nothing is there said of *the coming of Christ*; that he, in fact, is not spoken of directly; so that from the opening of the Revelation, when faithful ministers of Christ go forth as the horsemen of the first seal, until the closing scene, there is no account of the appearance of the Son of Man upon earth, or out of the temple of heaven, but in the vision before us. If the second coming of Christ, then, is described in the Apocalypse, it is to be found here. Here we do find his appearance beyond all dispute, conceded by all the commentators; and it is as true that his coming is not described anywhere else. In the final judgment scene his presence is *assumed* by many, but not stated. His name is not mentioned there nor his person described. This is a strong fact, the force of which cannot well be got over.

Notice also another. Under the sixth vial, when Babylon's defences were giving way, and the unclean spirits were abroad upon their mission to form the great confederacy of wickedness for the battle of the last day, in the midst of these pre-

parations for the final conflict, the startling warning was heard, like a clap of thunder from a clear sky, "Behold I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame." Here is the announcement of Christ's speedy and unlooked for coming ; and an earnest admonition to watchfulness, just preceding the last great earthquake, which fills up the wrath of God ; and now we have that actual coming described. Jesus Christ is represented as appearing for victory and judgment. These facts furnish strong presumptive evidence that this is the second coming of Christ, so often predicted.

But let us turn to the vision itself. Can another and consistent meaning, different from this, be evolved out of it? Another interpretation is given as follows :—We are told that it is a sublime and figurative description of the downfall of Babylon and the triumph of Christianity—the word of God prevailing over superstition and idolatry, and the powers of antichrist completely subdued. The armies of heaven are the church, or the servants of Christ going forth under his direction, to spread the truth everywhere among the nations, and plant the Gospel upon the demolished ruins of Satan's kingdom. It is, in short, the triumph of gospel truth in the world, over the systems of iniquity and error, under the *providential* government of Christ.

Can this meaning now be made out according to the principles of symbolical language? Let us examine ; for the question is not to be decided by authority, but by appeal to the fixed laws of symbols. That such a meaning can be derived from the vision by taking it in a *figurative* sense, there can be no doubt ; and this is what the commentators ordinarily do. They make the whole a figurative description of the triumph of the Gospel, Christ being present only by his superintending providence. By this course, however, the principles of symbolical language are clearly abandoned, and

a mere ordinary figurative meaning given. It is made simply a highly poetic description of the victory of truth and righteousness. On this plan the above meaning may be obtained from the passage. But if we keep to the principles of symbolic interpretation, as we manifestly ought, we shall be compelled to take another view of it.

I will state the reasons which forbid us to adopt the more common interpretation. According to this view, the Gospel of Christ, in the hands of the Christian ministry and church, is the great agency in securing this final victory. That Gospel makes progress more and more widely until every system of error falls, and every throne of despotism is cast down. Such now most clearly are not the agencies, nor such the peaceful triumphs brought to view in the vision before us. Christ on the white horse, is certainly not the symbol of the gospel, nor of his ministers, nor of his church; neither, in fact, are there any victories of love and mercy described at all. There is no gradual peaceful spread of truth, no conversion of these enemies to Christ and his cause. On the contrary, it is throughout a scene of judgment—a terrible treading of “the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God—“the supper of the great God,” to which all the fowls of heaven and the beasts of the field are gathered to feast upon the carcasses of the slain—while the beast and the false prophet are represented as taken and cast alive into a lake of fire, burning with brimstone. It will be remembered, also, that the events here described come in under the last plague, which is the filling up of the wrath of God. It is a scene of terrific judgment. Up to the very last moment, also, the powers of darkness are confederate against the church of God, preparing for a final onset. Babylon is congratulating herself upon her brightening prospects of glorious victory. “For she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death and mourning and famine; and she shall be

utterly burned with fire; for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her." To the last hour, therefore, do these blaspheming persecutors maintain their stand against the cause of God and truth, when they are suddenly arrested by an Almighty arm, and cast alive into the burning lake. They are not converted—they do not cease their blasphemies or persecutions—they fight to the last, and then *judgment* overtakes them. The whole description, from beginning to the end, with all the facts brought to view, is wholly unlike a symbolic scene which would describe the universal conquests of the cross. To represent the glorious triumphs of Christianity through the whole earth by the mission of the church, and the gospel, and the Holy Spirit, under the symbol of Christ going forth to judge and make war, and tread the wine-press of God's wrath, is at war with every principle of symbolic language. We want symbols of an entirely different character to describe such events.

But, again, can this vision of Christ upon his white horse, denote a mere providential superintendence, such as he is constantly exercising over the world? Not certainly upon the principles of symbolic language. Throughout the whole prophecy, thus far, we have found that when any symbolic agent is brought upon the panorama, whether horsemen, or beasts, or locusts, or storms, or witnesses, or harlot, or city, or earthquake, or whatever else, it always denoted some corresponding agents appearing on earth, and commencing their appropriate work. A symbolic agent is a real agent. Heretofore, also, up to the present vision, Christ has been seen only in the temple above in the midst of the throne, where he took the book of the seven seals. When that temple was open, we could see him there, or hear the songs and praises of those who bowed at his feet; and there he was conducting his *providential* government over the world. But now he appears upon this lower scene. From the opened heavens he goes forth a glorious conqueror, prepared to judge and make war,

his vesture dipped in blood, ready to tread the-wine press, which he does tread to the destruction of his foes. Why, now, this transfer of Christ from heaven to earth, if this is only a providential event under his government, like those which have gone before? By what law could such a symbolic appearance of the Son of God set forth a mere providential superintendence? and if it was necessary in this case, why should he not be made to appear in every other event, to show that it was done under his direction? Again, if this is merely a providential appearance of Christ, and not a real one, how can we prove that there was any reality in the appearance of the horsemen of the four seals, or the witnesses, or the woman upon the scarlet-colored beast? What right have we to remove one symbolic character from the panorama as an actual agent there, any more than another? And yet, again, if we make this a providential and not a real coming of Christ, on what principle of interpretation can we ever establish the fact of his second appearing? We must evidently find some better reason for turning this into a providential coming, than the very unsatisfactory one that it does not happen to fall in at the time and place where we think it ought; so that if the same vision had been dropped in at another place, where it would have suited us, we should have had no hesitation in pronouncing it a most plain description of Christ's second appearing, especially when preceded a little by the emphatic warning, "Behold I come as a thief." Where, then, we ask, is the principle that decides this matter, to be drawn out of the symbols themselves? And if this coming is a providential one, what shall we answer, a little further on, to some one that steals our weapons, and says that the great white throne before which the dead, small and great, stand, is nothing but that providential government of God, under which sinners pass condemnation upon themselves, and their sins find them out? It is evident, upon the slightest thought, that if we can turn the coming of Christ

in this vision into a providential one, we can do the same with any other, and can thus set aside his second coming altogether; for this is by far the strongest of any other. In fact, as stated before, there is none other.

The laws of symbolic language require us to take the appearing of Christ in this vision just as we do the appearing of any other symbolic agent, as an actual event. We cannot consistently give it any other meaning. The Son of God appears in his own name and person, because there is none other that can represent his infinite dignity. He bears his own glorious titles, the King of kings and the Lord of lords, yea, even a name written that no man knows but he himself. There is, therefore, no necessity for, no possibility of mistaking him, when he does appear; while it is a most strange way of dealing with the whole matter by turning his personal coming into a providential victory of Gospel truth. If we can deal thus with symbols, we can do anything with them, and make out any meaning we please. As for ourselves, we dare not fritter away the meaning of this grand vision of Christ's coming. His *symbolic* appearance must represent his *real* appearance, otherwise it can never be represented by anything.

We cannot, therefore, refer this vision to any other than Christ's personal second coming. He appears in his own person and character, while the symbols connected with him denote the object of his mission, and the work which he performs. His white horse shows him now a glorious conqueror—his crowns set forth his supreme dominion—the sword of his mouth, and his vesture dipped in blood, denote the dread work of vengeance on his foes.

I will pause here a few moments to call your attention to two prophecies of Isaiah bearing upon this subject, and referring to the same events. The first one is found in chapters 34 and 35. The prophecy commences with a description of the most tremendous judgments on God's enemies,

followed by a glorious scene of peace and prosperity to the church. Some refer the scene of destruction to the judgment day, and the final perdition of the wicked. But as Bishop Lowth, quoted also by Scott, says, this cannot be, for the desolation and destruction described are followed as a consequent by a most extraordinary reign of prosperity in the church. Says Lowth, "It seems, therefore, reasonable to suppose, with many learned expositors, that this prophecy has a further view to events still future; to some great revolutions to be effected in later times, antecedent to that more perfect state of the kingdom of God upon earth, and serving to introduce it, which the holy scriptures warrant us to expect." Barnes says of the same: "The prophecy before us, I regard as a kind of *summing up*, or recapitulation of all that he had delivered, and the general idea is, *That the people of God would be delivered from all their foes, and that future happy times under the Messiah would succeed all their calamities.*" I quote these to show that expositors agree in referring the prophecy to the latter days, immediately preceding the millennium. It reads as follows:

"Come near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye people; let the earth hear and all that is therein; the world, and all things that come forth of it. For the indignation of the Lord is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies; he hath utterly destroyed them; he hath delivered them to the slaughter. Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcasses, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood. And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll; and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree. For my sword shall be bathed in heaven; behold it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse to judgment." The above is a symbolical description, resembling in many points the sixth seal; and Idumea, one of the most powerful

kingdoms of those days, and an inveterate enemy of Israel, stands here as a symbol of God's enemies in general.

"The sword of the Lord is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, and with the blood of lambs and of goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams; for the Lord hath a great sacrifice in Bosrah, and slaughter in the land of Idumea. And the unicorns shall come down with them, and the bullocks with the bulls." The unicorns, bullocks, and bulls denote their strong and mighty ones. And "their coming down," that they shall be subdued. "And their land shall be soaked with blood, and their dust made fat with fatness. For it is the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion," the time when God will avenge his persecuted saints. "And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up for ever; from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever." It is thus that the smoke of Babylon's burning ascends up for ever, while the following verses describe the same desolation that we find in the Revelation applied to that city. "But the cormorant and the bittern shall possess it; the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it; and he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness. They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none shall be there, and all her princes shall be nothing. The wild beast of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island, and the satyr shall cry to his fellow; the screech owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest. There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under her shadow; there shall the vulture also be gathered, every one with her mate." The most solitary and offensive birds shall have undisturbed and perpetual possession. "Seek ye out of the Lord, and read." Look care-

fully at this prediction, and see if it be not fulfilled. "No one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate; for my mouth it hath commanded, and his spirit, it hath gathered them. And he hath cast the lot for them, and his hand hath divided it unto them by line; they shall possess it for ever and ever, from generation to generation shall they dwell therein."

This description of tremendous slaughter and utter desolation to God's foes, is followed immediately by another of as widely opposite character, and forms a part of the same prophecy, one being introductory to the other.

"The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them." Here is again the song of Alleluia over the downfall of the enemies of the church. The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad *for them*; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice, even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be brought unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon; they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God. Strengthen ye the weak hands and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not; behold your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped; then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes. And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called, The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it: but it shall be for those; the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon,

it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there; and the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Thus under the symbols of the restoration of the blind, the deaf, the dumb and the lame, to the full use of their senses, of the conversion of a wilderness to a fruitful field, and of a glorious highway upon which the ransomed of the Lord shall return to Zion, and where no ravenous beast shall be found, does Isaiah describe the future glories of Messiah's reign, introduced, however, with scenes of most terrific vengeance upon God's foes.

The next prophecy of Isaiah is found in chapters 62, 63. In the former the prophet is dwelling upon the future glories of the church, when the righteousness of Zion shall "go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth"—when the great highway of the Lord shall be prepared, and the stones gathered out—when his standard shall be lifted up for the people, and "the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughters of Zion, "Behold, thy salvation cometh," or as it is in the vulgate, the Septuagint, the Chaldee, the Syriac, and as is the idea in our own translation, Behold thy Saviour cometh; "behold his reward is with him, and his work before him;" the same idea as is expressed Rev. 22: 12. "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Like a glorious conqueror, he will mete out vengeance to his foes, and reward his faithful soldiers. *

In the midst, now, of these prophecies, respecting the future triumphs of the Gospel, and while the proclamation is sounding through the earth, "Behold thy Saviour cometh," Isaiah breaks out in the following sublime strain: "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bosrah?" Bosrah was the chief city of East Idumea,

or Edom, and this kingdom stands here, as in the former passage, the representative or symbol of all God's mighty foes. That this chapter also does not refer to Christ as a sacrifice for sin, shedding his own blood, any one may readily satisfy himself, by comparing it with the very different language of chapter 53, where Christ is represented in his humiliation and suffering. Here he is seen a mighty conqueror, returning unwearied from the slaughter of his foes. "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bosrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." It is thy glorious Redeemer and King. "Wherefore art thou red in thy apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat? I have trodden the wine-press alone; and of the people, there was none with me; for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in my heart, and the *year of my redeemed is come.*" Thus the day of vengeance and the year of redemption to Zion are intimately connected together. "And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold; therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me, and my fury it upheld me. And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth."

Here then again we have another most vivid description by Isaiah of that day of vengeance which shall overtake the persecutors and enemies of the church, when the year of God's redeemed is come. Behold thy Saviour cometh, and cometh as John also represents him with vesture dipped in blood, treading "the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." "Their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment, for the day of vengeance is in my heart."

selves together round about : thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord. Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat, for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe ; come, get you down, for the press is full, the fats overflow, for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision, (margin, concision or threshing,) for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem ; and the heavens and the earth shall shake, but the Lord will be the hope of his people and the strength of the children of Israel, So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God, dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain ; then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim. Egypt shall be a desolation, and Edom shall be a desolate wilderness, for the violence against the children of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land." Egypt and Edom are employed as symbols of the oppressors and persecutors of the church. " But Judah shall dwell forever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation. For I will cleanse their blood that I have not cleansed ; for the Lord dwelleth in Zion." Joel 2 : 30. Thus do the days of prosperity and glory to Zion clearly succeed that " great and terrible day of the Lord," which cannot therefore be the day of final judgment. That notable day is the day of controversy for Zion, when the year of the Lord's redeemed shall have come. Let this fact be remembered, for it has to do with one future argument.

Zephaniah, ch. 3 : 8, and Zechariah, ch. 12, prophesy of

confederacy of wickedness which was formed under the mission of the three unclean spirits. This is not a literal collecting of armies, and not therefore a literal slaughter upon a battle-field, nor a literal assembling of carrion birds, but a symbolic representation of the final and utter overthrow of the allied powers of sin in the world, of which the civil and ecclesiastical powers within the ten kingdoms are the great leaders. They are confederate against the Church of God, and are anticipating the victory. They have no idea of defeat, nor of surrender, for they are gathered in their strength. But judgment, swift and terrible, overtakes them; for he who sat upon the horse was now come to contend with them, who said, "I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment." In times past *the witnesses of Jesus* had been their opposing enemies, and their cruel prey. But who was this now coming "from Edom, with dyed garments from Bosrah? this that was glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I, that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." This is a symbolical description of the work of judgment by Christ; but it does not show that it is not really Christ. It is he, and not his witnesses.

The result of this conflict is, that "the beast, and the false prophet that wrought miracles before him," are taken, and "cast alive into a lake burning with fire and brimstone." These leaders are not slain upon the field, but taken prisoners, and alive consigned over to their doom. This shows that they maintain their blasphemies and usurpations up to the very last, to Christ's coming. They are found with their weapons of persecution in their hands, and alive they are cast into the burning lake, which is a symbol of their utter and eternal destruction.

The remnant slain with the sword, is the balance of the enemy's forces, the other allied power of evil, with perhaps

SERMON XXII.

Chap. 20 : 1-3.—And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound them a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled ; and after that he must be loosed a little season.

IN the issue of the battle of the great day of God Almighty, two of the great leaders of the hosts of sin were disposed of, and their forces scattered. But the grand master spirit of all was still abroad, and if left to roam, as ready as ever to concoct new schemes of wickedness. His turn, however, was now to come, though he was not at this time to receive his final doom.

The symbols of the chain with which the devil is bound, and the bottomless pit in which he is locked up, and a seal put upon his prison door, most clearly represent the fact of his confinement during the millennial period, so as to prevent entirely his access to the earth. The bottomless pit is not the lake of fire and brimstone into which the devil is afterwards cast, where also the beast and false prophet were. That lake of fire is the symbol of their eternal destruction or punishment. Satan does not meet this doom until after the millennium, and his release from his temporary confinement. (v. 10.) The bottomless pit means literally the abyss, the boundless deep, the space therefore beyond the confines of earth. Like a criminal, he is placed under arrest, securely manacled, shut up in this mighty dungeon, and a seal placed upon the entrance, to show that it is done by governmental

authority, and that there is no release for the prisoner, until he, whose right it is, shall order that door to be opened.

Such a symbolical binding with a chain, and locking up of the devil in the abyss, does not certainly mean that his influence is nearly abridged ; that he roams the earth still, seeking whom he may devour, but not able to obtain as many victims as before. Such an interpretation is an absolute contradiction of the symbols. To put the matter, however, beyond dispute, we are told expressly what the object of this binding is, " that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled ; and after that he must be loosed a little season." During the thousand years, then, he is not allowed to deceive the nations : and the only reason why he does not, is because he has no access to them. It is not for want of will or power, but opportunity ; for the the moment he is loosed, that moment do we witness again the fruits of his accursed work.

It may be worthy to remark that Satan appears here in his own name and person and character, because there is none other that can stand as his analogous representative. He is styled the dragon indeed, but described distinctly as " that old serpent, which is the devil and Satan." The dragon also is a great serpent. Satan, therefore, appears as a real actor in this vision, just as Christ does in the one preceding ; and we have the same reason for making the appearance of Christ real and personal, as we have the binding of this his mighty enemy. It is not merely the binding of *sin* but of the *devil* himself. So it is not a triumph merely of Gospel truth, but of the Son of God. Satan no more symbolizes sin than Jesus Christ does his Gospel. And what a *providential* binding of the devil would be, as different from a real one, I can form no idea. That adversary has always been providentially bound ; for he has ever been hemmed in by the great purposes of God. But when he shall be chained,

and locked up in the abyss where the nations can be deceived by him no more, he will then be bound as he never has been since he tempted our first parents to their fall.

How are we to understand "the thousand years,"—in a literal or symbolic sense? The latter, undoubtedly. This is a symbol, just as the chain, the key, the bottomless pit, and the seal are. Besides this, time is uniformly symbolized throughout the Apocalypse. There is no instance to the contrary; and if the millennium had been designed to be represented as a thousand years literally, the binding of Satan would unquestionably have been stated to be for a thousand *days*, just as the witnesses prophesy for twelve hundred and sixty days, and the court of the temple is given to the Gentiles for forty and two months. There is no reason or consistency in taking time in this instance in a literal sense, but symbolical in all the others; and the only reason which can be offered for departing from the uniform interpretation hitherto, is because a thousand symbolical years would make a longer millennium than we think it would be consistent or proper for God to have, which evidently is a very unsatisfactory reason. We are to interpret the Apocalypse according to the strict laws of symbolic language, if we can ascertain what they are, and thus let the prophecy conduct us where it will, in the same way that we must interpret the rest of scripture by the fixed laws of the language of common life, and let God reveal what truths he pleases, without our determining what they must be beforehand. Taking then the thousand years as a symbol, a day representing a year, the period during which Satan will be bound is to be three hundred and sixty thousand years; and this is the doctrine of the Revelation respecting the continuance of Christ's reign upon earth, that glorious period toward which prophecy has ever directed the eye of faith and hope.

You will permit me also to pause for a little while at this point, to show the harmony of this view with the great sys-

above the surface of the ground, the conclusion in our minds would not certainly be that the man was intending to do nothing more than build a mighty foundation, to be almost buried out of sight; but as we stood contemplating that deep and vast work of solid masonry, requiring the unremitting labor of years, and the expenditure of thousands of money, the thought would be, what magnificent, glorious structure is designed to be reared upon this foundation!

My brethren, God, the great architect, who "stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing," has been for nearly six thousand years (he finished the earth in *six days*) in gathering the materials and laying the solid masonry of that building upon which he has bestowed more labor and cost than any other in his universe, and which he designs to be the most glorious monument of his infinite wisdom and grace. Yet, after so long a period, and the expenditure of such vast treasures, you cannot discern any portion of the structure above the surface of the ground. The foundation is not completed yet. Very many, measuring God's works and plans by their own limited range of thought, and their own brief span of mortal life, have often looked at this work of the Deity, and supposed that this was the main building; and they have been vastly puzzled to make out any beauty, or utility, or wisdom in it. Some have even queried in their own minds, whether, if they had been consulted as the wise architects, they could not have furnished a much better plan for the Deity. They are in the condition of one into whose mind the idea has never entered of its requiring more than ten years at the utmost to build a house, and who should come across such a foundation as we have described above, taking for granted that this was the edifice itself. He had heard by report from others what a magnificent building was in process of construction, and that for *ten* years a large body of men had been constantly employed. He goes with expectations great-

Is this the God of the Bible and Christianity? The Christian has been content to reply, It is a mystery, which God himself must explain.

Then, also, have these same beholders looked at the ignorance, the superstition, the degradation, the crimes of horrid name and number, the contentions, bloodshed, and war, the miseries, sighs, and groans of wretched humanity, the judgments and woes of heaven upon an accursed race, while God's true children have been hunted like birds of the mountains, and been the continual prey of wild beasts—the history of the church being a dark history of tribulation and sorrow, during which the cry has been, “O, Lord, how long;” and while surveying this, they have been at a loss to solve the painful problem, or discover where the glorious beauty and the sublime symmetry of this building could be.

Why, no wonder, my brethren. They are standing amid the rough stone and the heaps of rubbish which are scattered in every direction around the scene of the building; and all that they can now discern are solid arches of masonry, upon which the superstructure is yet to be reared. All that rubbish will be cleared away, and that foundation hid from view, when the building shall rise and stand in its everlasting beauty. These six thousand years of labor have all been expended upon preparatory and foundation work, and if the great Architect can afford to take all this time to build the part that is to be under ground, rely upon it, there shall be a temple reared thereon, that shall be the joy and wonder of the universe.

I cannot, therefore, reconcile it with the consistency, the wisdom or vastness of God's great plans of redemption, that he should occupy six thousand years in preparing the way for the introduction of his glorious kingdom, toward which everything is converging, and then that it should last only one thousand years. It strikes the mind as out of proportion. If God can afford to take sixty centuries, to let sin and

ignorance and error reign, why should he be in haste to cut short his own glorious kingdom of righteousness at the end of ten? Why, Christ has given the beast and the great whore by themselves a dominion of twelve hundred and sixty years! Will he allow his own glorious honored bride no more than one thousand? It seems to bear an absurdity upon the very face of it.

Do you talk of heathenism brooding over the earth in all its dreadful terror for *ages*, and the vast proportion of the human race going down to perdition? No, it is no such thing; heathenism and sin have not reigned for ages, nor anything like it. They have reigned only six thousand years or less, which, instead of being *ages*, is a very short period. But you may begin to speak of ages, when a hundred thousand years of the reign of righteousness shall have rolled away, and you can look forward to many tens of thousands to come. Then your ages of heathenism will have dwindled away to a mere nothing; and instead of the vast majority of the race being lost, they will be but a drop in the bucket, a handful compared to that vast throng which no man can number, gathered out of every tribe, and kindred, and tongue, and people, under the whole heaven. We have not begun to open our eyes upon the stupendous vastness of this living temple of grace, which infinite wisdom has set itself to rear, if we imagine that only a few of our race are to be saved, while the vast body is to go down to death. There will be a far greater number of souls brought to glory, even during this preparatory period of tribulation, than many imagine. For God has so arranged it, in his wisdom and goodness, that where sin abounds, and heathenism reigns in darkest terror, a very large proportion of the human family is cut off in infancy; and the more fearfully that iniquity reigns, the more certain and dreadful does this exterminating process go forward. In heathen lands, the crime of infanticide prevails to an awful extent, so that in the cities of China, the dead cart

goes around to pick up the infants that have been thrown out into the streets ; and in the Sandwich islands, mothers have confessed the murder of six or eight of their own offspring. In many countries they have been made sacrificial offerings to their Gods. It is an awful picture. But thanks be to God, that he can overrule it for good, and make the wrath of man to praise him. We may rejoice that even from the dark abodes of heathenism, where no light of the Gospel has ever shined, a vast number, cut off from life in infancy, by the hand of disease or violence, shall stand upon Mount Zion to sing of redeeming love for ever. It is cause for joy rather than sorrow, that during this dark period of earth's history, so many of the human family have been removed, ere they have come to know their right hand from their left. Then add to these the company of God's redeemed ones, whom he has gathered during this same period, and called by his grace, and you will have no inconsiderable number saved from this time of abounding sin.

The fact should also be remembered, as a part of the wisdom of God's arrangement, that, from various causes, the population of the earth hitherto has been kept at the lowest point. The Divine curse has rested upon a large portion of the earth's surface, so as to make vast tracts absolutely uninhabitable. Blessed be God that it is so, and has been so from the beginning. By means of war, also, disease and crime, the process of depopulation has been constantly going forward. For how many ages, too, was this Western continent preserved from the knowledge of the human family, and held possession of by the beasts of the forest alone ? And may it not have been for this very reason that God separated it so widely from the shores of Europe and Asia, and made it so inaccessible, that the race might not have this field also in which to multiply in their rebellion ? Even now how small is the population occupying the boundless territory of the United States ! Settled as densely as England and Ireland

are, our country would contain six hundred millions, nearly two-thirds the present population of the globe.

These facts are deeply interesting as connected with God's great plans of mercy toward our race. It is not undesigned on his part, that the population of the earth has been kept at so low a point during this dark night of its sorrow. The curse of God is now resting upon it. But there is a day of redemption at hand, and "the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." The curse can be easily taken from the ground, and the desert literally be made to blossom as the rose.

Let these facts now be taken in connection with those ages of righteousness and peace which are to succeed the night of earth's sorrow, and will not the company of the redeemed be literally such as no man can number, while the portion of the few generations that may be lost will dwindle away to a number exceedingly small?

Is there any evidence now from nature or revelation, that God is not able to carry out his great plans to their accomplishment, on the same magnificent scale of grandeur on which he has begun them? Has *He* begun to build a tower without counting the cost, so that after laying the foundation, he is not able to finish? Or is the great Ancient of Days troubled for want of time, so that he is under the necessity of hurrying up his work at the last, and bringing it to a close in seven thousand years? Why, my brethren, some of these material worlds around us require ages, yea, millions of years, to complete a single revolution. Time is of no account with the Eternal Infinite. A thousand years and a single day are both alike to him. He first began with making the generations of men reach to nearly a thousand years. Why then may he not take time to complete his scheme of redemption on a scale of years commensurate with the grandeur of such a stupendous moral enterprise? Is there any evidence from Revelation, against such a long continuance of Christ's reign? I answer, none.

The literal interpretation of the symbol of a thousand years will be regarded certainly as very insufficient evidence. There is a class of passages indeed, which speak of the end of all things being at hand, and of Christ's coming quickly. But if this end spoken of is to be, as we shall hereafter show it is, the end of this dark night of sorrow and persecution, the end of antichrist and sin, bringing in a more glorious day—and if this speedy coming of the Son of Man is for the purpose of judgment on his foes, and the establishment of his own eternal kingdom of righteousness, then, the sooner that end cometh the better. If Christ is thus to come quickly, we say, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." We believe "the end" is at hand, that "the last days" prophesied of are drawing near to a close, when, according to Daniel, shall be "the end of these wonders," and according to John, "the mystery of God shall be finished." We shall leave this point, however, for more full discussion hereafter.

But the Scriptures do give us plainly to understand that Christ's kingdom is to be of very long duration. Compare Daniel's account of the continuance of his dominion, when the little stone becomes a mountain filling the whole earth, with that of the beasts which had preceded. He does not represent it as shorter even than that of the little horn, but as "an everlasting kingdom."

The Psalmist says of Christ, "He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor. They shall fear thee as *long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations*. He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass, as showers that water the earth. In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace *so long as the moon endureth*. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust. . . . There shall be an handful of corn in the

earth upon the top of the mountains ; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon," from a mere handful of corn shall spring up a harvest, the waving of which shall be like the mighty forest of Lebanon. " And they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth. His name shall endure for ever : his name shall be continued as long as the sun : and men shall be blessed in him : all nations shall call him blessed. Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed be his glorious name for ever : and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and Amen."—Ps. 72. Well might the Psalmist, in view of such a glorious reign of the coming Messiah, close with the earnest prayer, " Let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and Amen." It is the same prayer with which John closes the Revelation, " Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so come, Lord Jesus."

Such is the doctrine of God's word on this subject. The kingdom of Christ is to be enduring as the sun and moon, and until these heavens, like an old garment, shall be laid aside. God has commenced his noblest, most stupendous work, in the redemption of this fallen race, embracing the mighty sweep of ages in its accomplishment ; and we may dismiss the thought as unworthy of the subject, that the drama is to be brought to its close in about seven thousand years, of which six thousand are to be given to the dragon, the beast, and the great whore. No, my brethren, this earth belongs to Christ. He is to have it for *his* inheritance, to be given by him to the possession of his saints. Under his long and peaceful reign it shall bloom again like Eden. " His dominion shall be an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

In connection with this subject, I will call your attention to some thoughts which it may be important to dwell upon.

The question is sometimes asked, whether we need any new dispensation different from that now enjoyed by the church; whether the Gospel, under the outpourings of the Holy Spirit, is not capable of securing the moral renovation of the world, and whether we do not disparage the Gospel and the Divine economy by the personal coming of Christ at the millennial era.

To this I reply, that the question is not at all whether God is able to effect the regeneration of the world under the present state of things; for he is able to accomplish anything that is within the reach of omnipotence. But the simple question is, what are the events which he has predicted, and for which we are to look? We do not question at all that the Gospel of Christ, under the influences of the Holy Spirit, is to be the grand agency in the world's regeneration. Nothing else can be. This blessed Gospel is the wisdom and power of God unto salvation, and it is this very system that is to triumph in the earth. But it may well be doubted whether it is to be exactly in the way and manner that many Christians suppose.

It is certain that the day of millennial glory can never dawn upon our world until the great enemies of the church are removed out of the way; and the scriptures give us the most distinct assurance that it will be a period of darkness and trial and tribulation to the people of God, until they are removed. The reign of Christ will not commence until the beast and the false prophet cease their blasphemies; nor will they cease until judgment overtakes them, and they are cast down to destruction. Nor would this alone suffice. The great arch deceiver himself must be taken, and confined, so as to deceive the nations no more; and it is not the Gospel of Christ that is to bind *him*, but a mighty chain of omnipotence, while the deep abyss is to hold him an unwilling prisoner. Neither is the awful treading of the wine-press of the wrath of God any peaceful agency of the Gospel and the

Holy Spirit; but it is a work of desolating vengeance. It is not so much, therefore, that other agencies are to be brought into operation, but rather that present agencies in the field are to be taken out of the way, in order to subject this world to the dominion of Christ. That subjection cannot evidently take place under the supremacy or continuance of the beast and the false prophet; and a little reflection will make it equally clear that it cannot be until the devil is out of the way. Let us look at a few facts on this point.

Suppose that the evangelization of all the nations was now accomplished; that idolatry, and heathenism, and Mohammedanism, were done away, and the Gospel introduced into every land, even as it is in our own, would the work be accomplished then? Would Christ then reign in triumph and glory on the earth? Not at all. With the devil still abroad, that roaring lion, the nations would continue to be deceived as they now are. We should have infidelity, and vice, and irreligion, and opposition to the truth, and worldliness, and abounding iniquity, and apostacies, and lying wonders, just as we now witness all around us in our own Christian land. Civilize and Christianize every nation on the face of the globe, bringing them all up to the point which we occupy, and then the work is not half accomplished. And how are we to get beyond that point? There is the problem to solve. How are we to carry the work beyond the point of *evangelization*? Is the piety of the church actually on the advance, so as to furnish a rational ground to hope that the end will be accomplished through this means? We are often told that the piety of the church needs to be greatly increased, that it *must be* greatly increased, in order that she may accomplish the vast work committed to her hands; and that, with the present worldliness, and general declension of vital godliness prevailing among the professed friends of Christ, the world never can be converted. Mr. Barnes, commenting on Isa. 11: 13, says: "The church shall prosper only when

contentions and strifes shall cease; when Christians shall lay aside their animosities, and shall love as brethren, and be *united* in the great work of spreading the Gospel around the world. That time will yet come. *When* that time comes, the kingdom of the Son of God shall be established. *Until* that time, it will be in vain that the effort is made to bring the world to the knowledge of the truth; or if not wholly in vain, the efforts of Christians who seek the conversion of the world will be retarded, embarrassed, and greatly enfeebled. How devoutly, therefore, should every friend of the Redeemer pray, that all causes of strife may cease, and that his people may be united as the heart of one man in the effort to bring the whole world to the knowledge of the truth."

This is true, every word of it; and it is the language that we constantly hear from every pulpit. It is the one sentiment of the whole church. The people of God must be united with one heart and soul, and be possessed, far more deeply, with the love of Jesus, *before* the world shall be subjected to his sway. We now ask, do we see the evidences of such advance toward the desired point? Is the holiness of Christians greater now than in the days of the Apostles? Alas! are we not often pointed to those as the brightest days of the church's history. Is the holiness of Christians greater now than it was a century since? It may well be questioned. There are different *manifestations* of piety now, or rather different channels through which it finds development, such as active benevolence in spreading the truth. But the piety that *suffered* for Christ, two or three centuries since, was as deep and fervent as that which now *labors* for him. There is no such manifest advance in spirituality and devotedness, and no such diminution of divisions and contentions within the church, as would give us any reasonable ground to hope from this quarter. The painful state of declension in piety, the actual decrease of those entering the ministry, the spirit of worldliness and the eager haste to be rich, which like a

flood sweeps over Zion, all these things present such a dark picture, as leads some, at times, to think that the cause of Christ is really on the retrograde. The truth is, that the period from the days of the Apostle to the present time is the same in all its great features, and the piety of the church has been the same, except so far as modified by the providence of God, and the work which it was called to perform. So also it will continue to the predicted end.

Here now is the fallacy of the argument on this great subject. We are told, very emphatically, that we must have a large increase of piety and a hearty union of all God's people, in order to lay the foundation for the world's conversion, or be the *means* of bringing about the day of Zion's glory: when that very piety and Christian union are to be one of the glorious *results* of the reign of Christ. While Satan is at liberty to do his work, we shall, from the necessity of the case, have just such a state of piety as has prevailed for the last eighteen hundred years. There will be many having only a name to live, many who are conformed to the world, and many bringing reproach on the cause of Christ. There will be all the grades of piety and Christian activity that there now are. There will be the same or other errors prevailing, the same want of purity in doctrine, the same divisions and contentions, the same tendencies of high churchism. Multitudes will continue to be deceived with a false hope—multitudes will be working out a righteousness of their own, instead of relying on the righteousness of Christ. What is to prevent these results? Will not Satan continue to be busy in the church, as he has been hitherto? Will he not corrupt and enfeeble that church to the utmost of his power, and by all the means he can adopt? Will he not have churches of his own, baptized with the Christian name, and sanctified by outward Christian ordinances? Most undoubtedly he will. Mr. Barnes says, "*When* that time (the time of Christian union and devoted piety) comes, the

kingdom of the Son of God shall be established. *Until* that time, it will be in vain that the effort is made to bring the world to the knowledge of the truth." We add to this, that *until* that time also, it will be in vain to expect any radical change in the piety of the church. The thorough imbuing of the church with the Spirit of Christ is as great a work as the conversion of the world; and neither of them will be brought about *until* the kingdom of the Son of God shall be established. Christ himself has clearly and fully characterized the period of the world in which we are living. He warned his disciples of the time of tribulation that was coming. That they should be afflicted, and hated, and killed—that many should be offended, and should betray and hate one another—that many false prophets should arise, and deceive many—that iniquity should abound, and the love of many wax cold—that it should be a time of abounding error, and delusion, and iniquity, and persecution, and declension in piety, and apostacy. "But he that shall endure unto the end shall be saved." This is an exact portraiture of the age in which we live. It is the portraiture of the whole period since Christ uttered the warning; and the portraiture will be verified until "the end" comes. "When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the the earth?" Did you ever understand that significant inquiry of our Lord? Doubtless he will not. Instead of the wide prevalence of faith and piety, he will find a grand confederacy of wickedness prepared to make a final onset upon the church, and sing the song of victory over it, just as proud Pharaoh and his hosts were expecting to prevail finally against the children of Israel, when, with presumptuous hardihood, he followed the trembling fugitives into the very jaws of death. He will find, also, very many like the foolish virgins with no oil in their lamps; and a great many like the evil servant, who says in his heart, "My Lord delayeth his coming," and therefore begins to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and

drink, and be drunken. There is a vast deal of such arrogant assumption on the part of "the servants" in Christ's household, as if they were the lords and rulers there, instead of fellow servants. There are very many that arrogate to themselves an exclusive right to the possession of the house, and impudently turn their fellow servants out, as having no claim to be there, while they feast and riot in drunkenness. To many such, the Lord will come in a day that they look not for him, and at an hour when they are not aware, and will cut them asunder, and appoint them their portion with hypocrites and unbelievers. It is not true, therefore, that "when Christ cometh" he will find any different state of things in his household from what we now witness. Nor will there be any radical change until the great enemies of Christ and his cause are taken out of the way. Zion is to be redeemed, as of old, with judgment. Vengeance is to overtake the haughty persecutors of the church, and then the old dragon is to be bound so as to deceive the nations no more. He is now abroad, and gathering his forces for the last great conflict, which is rapidly hastening on.

Does any one inquire what the church of Christ is to do? Her duty is plain. She is to keep her garments pure and unspotted; she is to adhere steadfastly to the truth, and hold forth the word of life, coming out from the world and living separate. She is to publish to the nations the Gospel of Christ, and prepare them for his coming. As Christ says, "This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world *for a witness to all nations, and then shall the end come.*" The nations are to hear of Christ, to be to a greater or less extent evangelized, so that when his "judgments are made manifest" in the final overthrow of the beast and the false prophet, all nations may come and worship before him.—Ch. 15: 4. See you not, also, how God is opening the doors in every portion of the earth—doors long closed—that his messengers may bear to the most distant tribes

the tidings of mercy, and plant upon every shore the standard of the cross? The nations are beginning to be besieged by the missionaries of the church. The Bible is being put into every language under heaven. The name of Jesus is being sounded on every distant island. In his wonderful providence, God is pushing his church to the distant shores of the Pacific, whence a Christian nation may look out upon the millions of China and Japan. This work of missions will be urged rapidly on by Grace and by Providence, until the heathenism of every nation shall begin to totter, and their systems of superstition shall fall; when the last judgments of heaven upon the confederate powers of darkness shall startle the world, and accelerate with rapid strides its conversion and subjection to Christ, our Immanuel,

SERMON XXIII.

I SHALL call your attention, in the present discourse, to the testimony of scripture respecting the second coming of Christ, showing that the Word of God clearly sustains us in referring the vision of him who sat upon the white horse, who "was called the Faithful and True," to that event. I am well aware how difficult it is for those who have always connected his second coming with the final judgment, to think that any other view can be rendered even plausible. One of the strong reasons, also, which leads them to disbelieve entirely his pre-millennial advent is, that they see no reason for it at that time. There is no propriety in his coming then.

This is not to be wondered at, when Christians entertain such inadequate views respecting the millennial era, both as to its duration and character, and how it stands related to the present period of trial. Take such views as are stated by Brown, in his recent work on the Second Advent, page 333 : "But the millennium is as *truly*, though not in the same *degree*, a mixed state of the visible church as this is. Pre-millennialists are compelled to admit this. [Speaking for ourselves, we do not by any means.] There will be *tares* during the millennium in the field of the church; and the final apostacy, and the vast confederacy of daring enemies of Christ and his church, shows that these will not be few. In contrasting, therefore, the *mixed*, with the *unmixed* state of the church, which our Lord does in this parable of the tares, the millennium has no separate place, no standing of its own at all. With reference to the *unmixed* state—when 'the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their

Father,'—the millennium differs in nothing worthy of mention in the parable from the present state of the church." Mr. Brown thus supposes that the character of the millennium will be the same with that of the present state of the church, there being only a greater prevalence and degree of piety. He thinks that tares will be found as now, and "NOT A FEW" of them, as is proved by the subsequent apostacy on the loosing of Satan. He does not think that the devil is actually shut up, but his influence only abridged; that he has not as much to do as he has now. In short, there are error, and sin, and irreligion, "as truly, though not in the same degree," as at present. We do not wonder that Mr. Brown, with such exceedingly low, unworthy, and unscriptural views of that glorious era of which prophets have long foretold, should be opposed to the pre-millennial advent. It certainly does not fit into his system at all. We have already spoken of the duration of the millennium; of its character we shall speak hereafter; but I can assure my hearers that it has no resemblance to that described by the writer just quoted.

In order to bring the scriptural argument on this subject before your minds, which I must do as briefly as possible, let us go back and endeavor to ascertain from the Bible, where the *great epoch* of the world's history is; what is the grand event which it holds up prominent above every other, and to which all the others converge as to a centre. Where that point is, we shall be most likely to find the second coming of Christ. If that great era be the final judgment, then we might look for him there. If it be at some other point in the drama, it would not be unreasonable to find his appearing there.

The first glorious object which prophecy holds up to the eye of faith, is the woman's promised seed—the star of Jacob—the Shiloh from Judah—the prophet like unto Moses, whom God should raise up unto his people. He is held up

latter might easily pass unnoticed, while the mind might dwell alone on the former.

Go on still further, and we come to the glowing prophecies of Isaiah, which unfold still more clearly the same great truths. He points out the coming Deliverer as a suffering Saviour bearing our sins and carrying our sorrows, as despised and rejected of men. But the one great thought that seems to fill the mind of this evangelical prophet, and towards which it constantly runs, is the day of Zion's future glory under the peaceful reign of the Messiah. The introduction of that era is the grand theme of his prophecy, while he shows also very clearly that it is to be preceded by the most tremendous judgments.

Pass on to Daniel, and you find him minutely describing the political and ecclesiastical history of the world under the great powers which are to rule it, until one came like the Son of Man in the clouds of heaven, and "there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." All the other empires and powers should be broken to pieces, and made like the chaff of the summer threshing floor, which the wind carrieth away. But when he, like the Son of Man, came with the clouds of heaven, the saints of the Most High were to take the kingdom and possess it for ever and ever. Daniel speaks of it also as being only seventy and two weeks to the first coming of the Messiah, when he "should be cut off, but not for himself," when he was to make an end of sins, reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness.

Thus you will perceive that there are two grand events which form the subject of ancient prophecy, each becoming more and more clearly unfolded as time advances, and the

roduced at this point, will make the testimony of Scripture more emphatic.

It is the manner in which the sacred writers speak of "the latter days" and "the end of all things," and the meaning which they affix to these expressions.

By the last days and the end, they clearly point out the close of the long period of the reign of sin, previous to the establishment of Messiah's kingdom. "And it shall come to pass in *the last days*, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow into it." Isa. 2: 2, and Mic. 4: 1. By this is meant that Messiah's kingdom shall be set up in the last days, or the millennial era introduced. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the Fathers by the prophets, hath in *these last days* spoken unto us by his son." Heb. 1: 1. "Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in *these last times* for you. 1 Pet. 1: 20. Christ then came in these last days.

"For this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel: And it shall come to pass in *the last days* (saith God), I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: and on my servants and on my hand-maidens I will pour out, in those days, of my spirit; and they shall prophesy, and I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood and fire and vapor of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: and it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord, shall be saved." Acts 2: 16-21. "That great and notable day of the Lord," as we have seen heretofore, is that day of decision in the valley of Jehoshaphat, when the wine-press shall be trodden. *The last days*, then, are the days of the outpouring

tery of God shall be finished." Under the seventh trumpet the end shall come of which prophets have so long predicted. God will then finish the great mystery, and make it clear why he has permitted sin so long to triumph. These are the great facts in the minds of the sacred writers, and it is in view of these that they speak of the end, yea, "the end of all things being at hand." Thus Christ once appeared in *the end of the world* to put away sin. Nor am I aware that "the end" is ever applied by the sacred writers to the termination of the whole drama, nor that they even describe that end. It is not the event at all that they have in their minds when looking forward to the future. I shall refer presently to the explanation which Christ himself gives of "the end," in Matt. 24.

It is evident, therefore, that the eye of faith and hope was directed forward by prophecy to the finishing up of the great mystery of God, in the discomfiture of the powers of darkness, and the introduction of Christ's glorious reign, as "the end" unto which the followers of Jesus were called to *endure* through their trials and persecutions; and these are *the last days* through which the church is passing to a new and glorious era.

With this explanation I return to the examination of prophecy, as it passes over from old to new testament times. The first series of prophecies was now verified in the first coming of Christ, in his humiliation and suffering; a coming which the Jews had for the most part entirely overlooked: and we might now expect to have the great event of his second coming more distinctly brought to our view by Christ himself, and a more clear exhibition in the New Testament of the scenes that were to transpire before the advent of that glorious day.

The first and most important testimony is that of Christ himself, given in reply to the inquiries of the disciples on this very subject,—inquiries made "privately" by them, and which

And ye shall hear of wars, and rumors of wars : see that ye be not troubled : for all these things must come to pass, but *the end is not yet*. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows." He thus informs them that the "end of the world" was not, as they might have supposed, immediately at hand, but at some distance, and that meanwhile it was to be a troubled period of wars and fightings among the nations, of revolutions and commotions, with desolating judgments from the hand of God, in the form of famines, pestilences, and earthquakes. These, too, were to be but "the beginning of sorrows," the foretaste of what was to come. All this would require a long period for fulfillment.

"Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you ; and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. And this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, (a different word entirely from that used in verse 3, where the 'end of the *world*' is inquired for,) for a witness unto all nations : and *then shall the end come*." Here then is another sign, or characteristic of the period that was to intervene before the coming of Christ, or the end of the world. It was to be a time of sore trial and persecution to God's people—of widespread apostacy and error—of declension in piety—of hatred and offence—of abounding iniquity and delusion—when false prophets would teach their lies and lead multitudes away—and *all nations* would unite to oppose the church of God. Nevertheless, "this Gospel

a minor affair altogether, and Christ dismisses it with a few words.

In verse 21, Christ resumes his remarks concerning the character of the period which is to intervene to his second coming, describing it as a time of "great tribulation," which it was necessary to shorten, for the elect's sake. It was a time during which "false Christs and false prophets should arise, showing great signs and wonders, insomuch that if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." *Behold I have told you before*. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold he is in the desert, go not forth; behold he is in the secret chambers, believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the East, and shineth even unto the West, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be." His "coming" will be distinct, manifest to all, and beyond mistake, even as the lightning's vivid glare; so that there will be no necessity of going into the desert or the secret chambers to find him.

"*Immediately after the tribulations of those days*, (referring to the wars and persecutions and apostacies which he had just been describing,) shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heaven shall be shaken (describing the last terrible judgments of the seventh vial or the treading of the wine-press—the former scenes of tribulation being "the beginning of sorrows"—these being the last). And *then* shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." Now if anything is positive and clear, it is that this second coming of Christ is described as following immediately this dark period of tribulation through which the people of God are called to "endure to the end." If we take the plain import of the words of Christ, and we are to remember, too, that he was giving the signs which should precede his coming, we cannot put any other meaning

iously looking. "Your redemption draweth nigh." The coming of Christ *precedes* that redemption, and it immediately *follows* this long and dark night of troubled sorrow, when the church, like a tempest-tossed bark, waits and looks for the morning. We claim now that these clear and positive declarations of Christ are decisive on this subject, and fix the time of his second coming *at the close of this troubled period of the world, and immediately preceding the day of Zion's redemption.* But the subject is not concluded yet.

Christ goes on to speak of the suddenness of his coming, which shall be like the flood upon the old world, and warns his disciples to be on the watch, and not like the evil servant, who says in his heart, "My Lord delayeth his coming, and shall begin to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken. The Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder."

To illustrate the same point, he introduces the beautiful parable of the ten virgins, who go forth to wait the bridegroom's coming, not knowing what hour he may approach. You recollect the sad condition in which the foolish five were found, and how they came when the door was shut and obtained no entrance; from which Christ draws the solemn warning, "Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein *the Son of Man cometh.*" Christ, then, is the bridegroom here represented, for whose coming his church is anxiously looking, that they may be present at the happy espousals, and enter into the marriage feast. Turn now to the Revelation of John, and see when this marriage of the Lamb takes place. It is immediately after the overthrow of great Babylon, when the glad song of Alleluia echoes through the universe, "for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." This marriage is the public vindication of the church by Christ as his own people, while the supper is the long reign of blessed-

standing like his ancient people upon the farther shore, they may "sing the song of Moses and the Lamb."

An additional description is given in Matt. 25, which is not mentioned by the other two evangelists, and evidently for the reason that their accounts were complete without it. They give all the important facts of our Saviour's narrative, all that are necessary to a full understanding of the subject. The description given in Matt. 25 is, therefore, only a more minute detail of the judgment which will take place at the coming of Christ, and refers not to the *raised dead* at the final judgment, but to the living "nations" with whom Christ will deal as the oppressors and persecutors of his church through the period of their long tribulation. There is nothing in the passage itself to forbid this interpretation, while there are several things that require it. The fact already mentioned is a very strong one, that it is entirely omitted by Mark and Luke, which shows that it cannot refer to any different event than the one already described. If the 25th chapter of Matt. had been left out of the Bible, we should have had every material fact given by the three evangelists, in reference to Christ's second coming; and we have shown already how that coming is fixed definitely at the end of *this age*, and previous to the day of Zion's redemption. The additional statement by Matthew adds, then, no new facts to the case.

It is the same thing which Daniel describes at the close of the twelve hundred and sixty years:—"I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of Days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: *the judgment was set, and the books were opened.* I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn

great mission was now to bear witness of him to all the nations, and, of course, bear witness in the midst of those who denied and rejected his claims. Their work marks the character of the period that was before them. They were to be Christ's witnesses amid abounding sin, and delusion, and error. He was then separated from them, and while they stood entranced by his ascent, two heavenly messengers stood by them, and said, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven. This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Here is the most distinct announcement of Christ's personal coming, though no time is here fixed: but may we not suppose, that when he does thus come again, it will be to "restore the kingdom to Israel?" Thus the disciples understood it, as is clear from what Peter says, Acts 3: 20, 21:—"And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you; whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." When now are those glorious times of restitution of all things, which has been the grand theme of prophetic vision, and to which the eye of faith and hope has been directed forward from the beginning? Is it the day of final judgment? The prophets say nothing about that event. Is it heaven? That is not a subject of *prophecy*, but of *promise*. What prophets told of in the future, relates to this world, events to transpire on earth. And who can question for a moment that the blessed times to which they looked forward were those of the Messiah, when he should reign in righteousness over a ransomed world, the heathen being given to him for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. Yes, "the restitution of all things" will be when great Babylon shall fall, and the universal shout shall go up, like mighty thunderings, "Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." There is no other

they shall not escape.” There is nothing now in this passage that *fixes the time* of this coming, yet no one will doubt that it refers to Christ’s second personal advent. But let us go on to the second Epistle. It seems that this first letter produced much excitement and alarm among the Thessalonians, who received the impression from it that Christ was to appear very soon, that they might behold him at any day or in their lifetime. The Apostle accordingly writes them another letter, which is mostly occupied with this one subject, and in which he corrects their misapprehensions, as well as quiets their fears. Here now is a fair opportunity for the Apostle to tell us unequivocally respecting the time of Christ’s advent, so that there need be no mistake, which thing he does. In the first chapter he reiterates what he had said before, respecting *the fact* of Christ’s personal coming. They had not made a mistake on that point. “In flaming fire” he shall come, “taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power ; *when he shall come* to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe.” There was no misapprehension then on this point, but there was in respect to his immediate appearance. “Now we beseech you, brethren, by (or concerning) the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as *that the day of Christ is at hand.*” The word, “at hand” in the original here means *immediately impending, very near*—and is different from the one ordinarily translated “at hand,” which may mean near in a comparative sense, as we often say, the millennium, or eternity, is near at hand. The idea of the Thessalonians was that Christ was to appear very soon. “Let no man deceive you by any means ; for that day shall not come except” what ? There come the millennium first ?

upon the one grand development of error during this period, in "the man of sin," and describes that. This "Wicked" was to be revealed first, and *then* Christ was to come, for he was to be destroyed "*with the brightness of his coming*," that very coming of which the Apostle had all along been speaking.

It only seems strange, my brethren, that a thing so plainly stated as this is, should have been to so great an extent overlooked by those who have studied the Bible. I am amazed at it, and confess myself to have been in the same condemnation. Need we wonder that the Jews overlooked the prophecies respecting Christ's first coming as a suffering Saviour, when we are so blinded to such clear statement of facts respecting his second coming in his kingdom and glory? They confounded his first coming with his second, and so rejected him as an atoning Saviour; we, as blindly, confounded his second coming with his first, and thus set aside his exaltation to the throne of his glory. I only add that if any undertake to say that there shall not only "*come a falling away first*," but a long and triumphant reign of righteousness first also, they undertake to say what neither Christ nor his apostles have said, when explaining this subject.

The above passages are, so far as I know, all in the New Testament, aside from the book of Revelation, which attempt specifically to fix the *date* of Christ's advent, as connected with preceding and succeeding events. His coming is mentioned in numerous other places, and is constantly referred to as a ground of encouragement and hope to God's people; but referred to as a well understood matter, without specifying the time of its occurrence. I might protract the argument much further, but it does not fall within my province here to write a treatise on the second advent; and in running over the Bible view on this subject, I have endeavored to seize upon the main points, and expound those passages where Christ and his apostles attempt themselves to tell us

of his advent, as brought into comparison with the boundless years of his own infinity ; for that would have given no possible idea at what distance it might be. It might have been myriads of ages removed, and still in *that sense* been near. But it was at hand, as compared with events in time ; and if Christ comes at the termination of this period of reigning iniquity and delusion, he is coming quickly ; and we, who love his appearing, may wait the glorious day of redemption, when our Immanuel Jesus shall take the sceptre, and reign so long as the moon endureth. Even so, Amen.

SERMON XXIV.

Chap. 20 : 4-6.—And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them : and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands ; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection : on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

THRONES are the symbol of exaltation, honor, and dominion, and here denote the fact, as stated by Daniel, that the kingdom under the whole heaven is given in possession to the saints. The “judgment” given to those who sat upon them, is the power and authority which they exercised. The same word is used when it is said of the twelve Apostles, They shall sit upon thrones, *judging* the twelve tribes of Israel. When God’s avenging judgments are spoken of, a different word is employed. The idea, therefore, is the same as expressed at the close of the verse, in their reigning with Christ a thousand years.

Who were they that occupied these thrones ? Either the whole millennial church, or the risen saints and martyrs spoken of in immediate connection. It may be applied to either, though perhaps it is more naturally applied to the latter, whom John saw, and of whom it is said that they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

Some, in referring it to these, suppose that the risen saints will literally administer the government of the world during the millennial period. This, however, cannot consistently be the meaning, any more than where it is stated of the same,

in the next verse, that "they shall be *priests* of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." These martyrs are certainly not to exercise the office of the priesthood; neither are they literally to be kings and occupy thrones. Neither would there be enough thrones on earth for all of them.

The idea is that Christ is to reign, and these, his saints, are to reign with him. They are to be his blessed subjects, whom he is to exalt to honor and power, under his peaceful sceptre of righteousness. The thrones thus properly denote that the kingdom under the whole heaven is given to the saints of Jesus. It is the grand event following the binding of the old serpent, and the overthrow of the thrones of despotism.

The next thing that John beheld was the resurrection of the saints. Some indeed have questioned whether any resurrection is here described at all, because it is said that John "saw the *souls* of them that were beheaded," while their bodies are not mentioned. But surely it was not the design of this vision to inform us that the souls of the martyrs were alive. That was no new event now coming to pass. Their living is distinctly stated to be as their resurrection, while it is said of the "rest of the dead," that they lived not until the thousand years were expired. These souls of the martyrs were part of the company of the dead spoken of, the part that "lived," while "the rest lived not." It is clear, therefore, that their resurrection is intended.

The next point of inquiry is, who are they that are said to be raised? Some suppose that the martyrs alone are mentioned—those "that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God." But, beside these, there is described the whole body of those who "had not worshipped the beast, neither his image; neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands"—all, therefore, who had adhered to the testimony of Christ during the reign of

sometimes take the literal sense instead of the figurative, the very thing that Mr. Scott himself frequently does. Nay, more; a few verses further on, another resurrection is described; and yet those commentators who argue so strenuously for the figurative meaning in the first one, and think it so gross and almost absurd to adopt the literal mode of interpretation, when they come to the second, seem to have forgotten all the arguments that they had just now urged, and adopt the literal meaning as if it were a matter of course, and they were not even to be called on to give a reason why. The truth is, the commentators, to a great extent, have no principle or rule by which to determine the question when a description is symbolic and when not; and they not only interpret some things literally, and some figuratively, but they go so far and are so inconsistent as to give to the very *same thing* in one place a literal and in another a symbolic meaning—of which we have a most striking instance in the two resurrections of this chapter. In such interpretation now we maintain there is no reason or consistency; and insist that it cannot be left to the option or caprice of the expositor to give a literal or symbolical meaning to the same thing, just as it may suit his views. If this resurrection must be symbolic, so let it be. Be consistent, however, and make the next one the same; for that which determines the character of the one, will fix that also of the other.

But let us pass to the next point. If this is a symbolic resurrection, does it properly symbolize the event to which it is referred? We answer unhesitatingly in the negative. That such a *figurative* meaning might be given to the language, we concede; and this is the ground on which the commentators reason, making no distinction between *symbols* and *the figures of speech* that may be employed by orators and poets. Mr. Brown, in his work on the Second Advent, interprets the language in this general and loose sense. He says, page 237, "No one can say that this is an unusual

need one; for death and the grave never had power over him. There is not the least similarity in the two cases.

I will now give some reasons which show clearly that the resurrection described cannot be the symbol of the revival of a dead cause.

In the first place, it is *not the fact*, that the cause of Christ was dead, or that it needed a *resurrection*. There is no ground for any such representation. The church of Christ does not become extinct before the millennium. That church is represented in *the wilderness*, but not in its *grave*. Mr. Brown seems to feel this, and therefore qualifies his statement by speaking of the cause being "as good as dead," which is just as far from the truth. The church of the living God, previous to the millennium, is neither dead nor "as good as dead;" nor is any such view of the subject given in the Apocalypse. The interpretation, therefore, fails in the very important particular, that the facts to which it is applied are not true. This is a radical defect, and utterly vitiates the whole thing. Again, the martyrs and witnesses cannot be taken as symbols of the millennial saints, as one saint cannot *symbolize* another saint. They are the *same* and not *analogous* objects. If it had been intended to describe the millennial saints here in this passage, they would have been so designated by some appropriate term in their own persons, and not as the martyrs of past ages. Thus they are designated in the following chapters, in the description of the new heavens and earth, and the new Jerusalem, both of which represent the millennial period. In chapter 21: 3, they are designated as the "*people*" of God: verse 27, as "*they which are written in the Lamb's book of life*:" chapter 22: 3-4, as "*his servants*," having "*his name in their foreheads*." Nowhere are they described under the *symbol* of the martyrs and witnesses of the past. Instead of these last being employed as symbols of another and different body of men, they represent themselves, as is clear from chapter 6: 9,

may speak of the decay and growth of seeds, to *illustrate* the resurrection; but the decay of a seed does not *symbolize* the death of a saint, neither does its germination *symbolize* his resurrection. Nor is there any change that can do it. There was the same necessity, therefore, for speaking of the resurrection in its literal meaning, as there was for describing the characters of this vision under their own names. This is confirmed, and put beyond doubt, by the fact that the resurrection at the final judgment is described, only six verses afterward, in the same literal way; and no one questions how this is to be understood. "I saw the dead small and great stand before God—and the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to his works." Why now is this *literal*, while the rest of the book, and the *rest of the vision too*, is almost wholly symbolical? for the white throne and the books opened are plainly so. There must be some reason for it; and what is more satisfactory than the one just given—that there is no analogous change that can properly symbolize that of the raising of a saint from his tomb?

But we are not left to our own conclusions on the subject. To put the meaning of the passage beyond dispute, and show what was the sense intended, the inspired explanation is added, "*This is the first resurrection.* Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God, and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." Similar explanations are made throughout the book. "The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches; and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches."—Chapter 1: 20. "And golden vials full of odors, *which are the prayers of saints.*"—Chapter 5: 8. "*The ten horns are ten kings*"—"The waters, where the whore sitteth are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues"—The woman is

how the mind accustomed to connect the resurrection with the final judgment alone shrinks from admitting another one at the millennium.

When that fearful tragedy of Calvary was enacted eighteen hundred years ago, and Jesus crying with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost, "Behold the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; *and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves* after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many."—Matt. 27: 51–53. Perhaps you never thought of this fact of Scripture history, probably not in this connection. Suppose it had been prophesied beforehand that a resurrection of the saints would take place upon the crucifixion of the Messiah, how many would have argued that it must have a figurative meaning, for the resurrection was not to take place until the judgment, and then all were to rise together—that the meaning of the prophecy was that God would raise up many *with the spirit of his ancient servants* to preach his Gospel, even as John came in the spirit and power of Elijah. I know not that this resurrection was prophesied of at all; but here is the fact recorded that when Jesus died, many of his saints did rise from their graves. Such an event then is not an unheard of thing in the history of redemption that is already past. We might start many questions, more easily asked than answered, in respect to this matter. We might inquire whether these saints were brought back from the joys of heaven to the trials and sins of earth—whether they engaged again in the avocations of life—with what bodies they came—what they told of heaven—whether they died and were buried again—whether they will experience another resurrection. But these questions, nor a hundred more, alter not the *fact* recorded, that they did rise.

Let me ask now, if the *death* of Christ was such an event

as to open the graves, and bring many of the sleeping saints from their dust, what may we not expect, when this same Jesus shall come again "the second time, without sin unto salvation"—come in power and glory to reign and give this ransomed earth to his redeemed? If in the hour of his deepest humiliation, when earth was covered with a pall of thick darkness, and no voice was heard but the wailing cry of the Saviour's agony, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"—if in that hour of sore travail to the Son of God, the graves could not hold their sleeping dead, what may we not look for, when that shout of Alleluia shall go up like the sound of many waters and mighty thunderings, echoing and re-echoing round the universe: when the Son of David shall sit upon the throne of his glory, and shall tread alone the wine-press of Jehovah's wrath? Say not, my brethren, if you find the prophecy now recorded, that the martyrs and saints of Jesus shall then come out of their graves to meet and welcome their Lord, and enter in with him to the marriage, that it is all *a figure of speech*, to be interpreted in a mystical sense.

Let me suggest another thought. If the reign of Christ is to endure tens and hundreds of thousands of years, as the Scriptures warrant us to believe, does it not seem a long time to you, believer in Jesus, to be sleeping in the dust to the end of that period? And if Jesus Christ shall come in his glory and power at the commencement of it, do you not want to be there to see him? Is not this the Christian's joyful hope, even "the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ?" "That when he shall appear, we may have confidence and not be ashamed at his coming?" Is it not the deep conscious desire of every new born soul, Oh! let me be there to welcome my Saviour when he comes, and share the glorious revelations of that day? Well, that desire will be fulfilled. Hear what Paul says on this very point for *the comfort of believers*, "I would not have

you be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so also them which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming, the Lord shall not prevent (have precedence over) them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air : and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."—1 Thess. 4 : 13-18. Paul thus assures the Thessalonian Christians for their comfort, that they shall all witness the coming of their Lord, and that those who fell asleep before the day of his revelation, would be awaked to meet him with those who were alive and remained to his coming. The resurrection of believers then takes place at his second appearing, and this he shows in his second Epistle, to be at the destruction of antichrist. Again Paul says, "For as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order : Christ, the first fruits ; afterwards *they that are Christ's at his coming* : then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father."—1 Cor. 15 : 22-24. "On the exact sense of *the end*," says Bloomfield, "expositors are not agreed," and quotes one who refers it to the order of the resurrection which Paul was describing. The word *cometh* is supplied in our translation, and may therefore be left out. The passage will then read thus : Christ the first fruits ; afterward *they that are Christ's at his coming* ; then the end," (or the rest of the dead,) when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God. This would describe "every man in his own order." Christ first, then his people at his coming, then the rest of the dead

at the final judgment. We do not rely upon this, because the passage is confessedly a difficult one. Without this, it makes clear the resurrection of believers at Christ's coming; and speaks of their resurrection as a distinct thing at that time, giving not the slightest intimation that the wicked are to have any part in it. Nay, the Apostle could not have stated the order of the resurrection as he did, making the second one mentioned the peculiar portion of the saints, if the wicked were then to arise as well as they. If it was a general resurrection of all, it could not be any privilege to the believer: just as when pardon and life are promised to the penitent and believing, they are from necessity denied to all others.

In view, now, of these facts, we may understand what Paul meant, when he speaks of it as his highest ambition, to attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Counting all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ—counting all but dung, that he might win Christ and be found in him—"that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead."—Phil. 3: 10, 11. If now there is but one general resurrection of the righteous and the wicked at the last day, why need Paul have been so anxious, and made it a point of such effort to attain this thing. He would attain it, of course; every one will. Take, however, the grand idea that the saints enjoy a resurrection of themselves, and that when Christ comes in glory to sit upon his throne, he brings his chosen with him, then you may understand what the Apostle's glorious hope and ambition were, "if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." There is a peculiarity in the word *resurrection* in this passage, of which I will speak further in a moment, after commenting on one more passage, where Christ speaks of the resurrection in answer to the Sadducees. "The children of this world (this

age) marry, and are given in marriage: but *they which shall be accounted worthy* to obtain that world (that age) and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage; neither can they die any more; for they are equal unto the angels, and are the children of God, *being the children of the resurrection.*”—Luke 20: 34–36. The idea plainly expressed here is, that a certain portion of the race, those who are the children of God, are *counted worthy* to attain this resurrection state, being designated, by way of eminence, *the children of the resurrection.* How can this be, however, if the righteous and the wicked are all raised together at the last day? Whatever there be in the mere matter of resurrection, all experience it then alike.

But there is another idea expressed in the original, which makes this very striking and clear. The resurrection is spoken of in the Bible in two ways, not noticeable in our translation, but very evident in the Greek. There is the resurrection *of the dead*, and a resurrection *from among the dead*; the latter conveying the idea of a portion being taken out from among the dead and raised, while the rest are left in their graves. Thus Christ is spoken of as being raised *from among the dead*; and likewise in the passage before us, “They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection *from among the dead*—these are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.” The resurrection *of the dead* all will attain, but for the resurrection *from among the dead*, only a portion shall be found worthy.

This, now, is the peculiarity of the word used by Paul in Phil. 3: 11. It is not the ordinary word meaning resurrection—but, compounded with a preposition, it is a *resurrection out of, or, from among.* Bloomfield says:—“By resurrection here is denoted not *simply* resurrection, but the resurrection of *the just*, in order to be received into celestial glory.” Bloomfield does not advocate a separate resurrection

occasion, when the long period of tribulation to the church shall be over, when all her mighty enemies shall be vanquished—Satan bound—when Christ shall take possession of his promised throne and give the kingdom to his beloved saints? Will not that be a fitting occasion for the martyred ones of past time, whose cry has been, “O Lord how long?” and for all who have endured to the end, and been waiting for their Lord with lamps burning and loins girded, to be waked from their slumbers to enter with him to the marriage. This was the Apostle’s glorious hope, to which he was looking forward. Said he, in anticipation of speedy martyrdom, “I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto *all them also that love his appearing*.” 2 Tim. 4 : 6-8. This crown of life was the portion, then, not of the martyrs alone, but of all who love the appearing of their Lord.

In regard to the many questions which might be asked with reference to the condition, the appearance, the employments, and the residence of the risen saints, and their intercourse with earth, I know nothing, and indulge in no speculations. I receive the simple fact of revelation that the saints will then be raised, and there I rest till God shall be pleased to reveal something further.

There are several interesting questions which will come up for discussion respecting the millennial reign of Christ, when it is more particularly described under the symbol of the New Jerusalem. In the present chapter it is but briefly spoken of. The whole vision is embraced in the two points of the thrones and them seated thereon, and the resurrection of the saints, who live and reign with Christ a thousand years. The vision then passes on to the close of the millennial

was, and go in search of him, but find him nowhere—he has been swept off the stage. The “dragon is laid hold on,” in the same sense precisely that “the beast was taken.” THE CHURCH WILL DO BOTH, not only defeating antichrist, but thereafter for a thousand years never permitting the devil to gain an inch of ground to plant his foot on over the wide world.” The idea, then, is that by the wider and wider prevalence of the Gospel, the devil’s territory and means of mischief are abridged, until finally he can gather no public party at all, and he has to remain idle for want of work to do; “his trade is at an end.” With such views, it must be extremely difficult to find any plausible solution of the final apostacy and ascendancy of Satan again, after all the powers of truth and righteousness have been gathering force for ages.

But the above representations do not accord with the facts of Scripture. Apocalyptic vision informs us that the devil is to fight desperately to the last, gathering all his forces for the great final conflict, “the battle of the great day of God Almighty,” and when the beast and the false prophet are taken alive, and cast into the lake of fire, then Satan is bound with a great chain, cast into the abyss, and a seal placed upon his prison door, so that he should go out to deceive the nations *no more*, till the thousand years should be fulfilled. It is not the *Gospel* that binds *him*, but Almighty power; and not until that satanic spirit is thus bound, can there be peace and happiness to earth. As soon also as he is let loose again, he goes abroad at once to deceive the nations; and error and iniquity begin to abound, as they did in ages long gone by.

In this view of the subject there is no difficulty in conceiving how the event is brought about. In Eden Satan secured the fall of our first parents from their happy innocence: and when admitted to earth again among those who are still imperfect, why may he not succeed there also?

he can organize his party again, the camp of the saints and the beloved city will be encompassed by them as now.

How long the "little season" of Satan's release will be, we do not know. It will be a *little season*, if it is six thousand years, the period of Satan's present supremacy; for it is spoken of as "a little season," not as measured by our brief span of mortal life, but by the great plans of the Deity, and those ages of righteousness and peace which are to come.

These enemies, however, in the end are to meet a signal overthrow, like as when Christ came to tread the wine-press, and bring great Babylon into remembrance. The fire from heaven consuming them is probably a symbol of their utter destruction by the judgments of Jehovah.

Chap. 20 : 11-15.—And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heavens fled away ; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God ; and the books were opened : and another book was opened, which is the book of life : and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it ; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them : and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

THE *throne* here is a symbol of judgment and supreme sovereignty, its dazzling whiteness indicating the impartiality and justice of the proceedings. *The books* denote the fact, that the character and actions of men are all perfectly known and remembered, as if they had been kept recorded in the archives of heaven—their being *opened*, that every thing is now to be brought to light, and judgment given according to the record made. *The book of life* denotes that God knows all his chosen people. In the next chapter it is called the Lamb's book of life. The infinite majesty and glory of him who sat upon the throne is denoted by the heaven and earth fleeing from his presence, not that they actually did so,

of the Revelation is not to be confounded with the throne of Christ's glory, as described by Matthew. The former is a symbol merely, denoting the authority of him who calls the dead to judgment. The one in Matthew is not a symbol, but a *figure of speech*, used in ordinary language, and represents the kingdom which Christ was to inherit.

At this judgment scene, the dead are awaked and called to be present, standing before God—"the small and great," not the young and old, but of all ranks, the high and low. I have given the reason above why the resurrection is described here literally, without any symbol, and nothing further need be said.

The whole description of this resurrection scene is perfectly consistent with the idea that they are the *wicked* dead who are now awaked for judgment. The righteous are not mentioned, neither as to their persons, nor the reward of eternal life bestowed upon them. We have the punishment of the wicked, they being cast into the lake of fire, but nothing is said of the righteous being welcomed to glory. The whole description implies the facts previously stated, that the sleeping saints were awaked to share the blessedness of the first resurrection at Christ's coming; while the dead now called forth, are those whose names were not found in the book of life; and being "judged out of those things written in the books, according to their works," they receive their just and final doom in the lake of fire, the symbol of God's eternal vengeance.

Three places are mentioned as delivering up their dead—the sea, death, and hell. By the last is meant *the grave*, being so rendered in the margin of our Bibles. By *death*, which held the second portion, we are, probably, to understand the place which contains the *unburied* dead. The three embrace all the places which contain the bodies of men; for the human race have either been buried in the earth, or in the sea, or cast out without finding a grave at all. The last

may be described as the prisoners of *death* itself, held by him alone. But all are called to deliver up their victims—death, the grave, and the sea.

“And death and hell (or the grave) were cast into the lake of fire,” by which is denoted their final destruction. They were not to hold any more victims. The *second death* was now to reign without end, and there would be no need of the grave any more.

I make a single remark in conclusion. My hearers will be astounded and awe-struck, as I myself have been, at the meaning which has been evolved from the symbols of this book; and the first thought with every one will be, are they so? can they be true? One thing satisfies my own mind on this point, which I will give by illustration. Suppose an iron safe, containing great treasures, was placed before us, which was secured by a lock of most peculiar and intricate construction; the bolt of which must be turned a great number of times, and could be turned throughout only by its own key. We are required to open it—we try the experiment—and applying a key, turn the bolt a few times, when it strikes a ward which defies all further progress. That is not the key. We try another with the same result, and another, and another. We think we never shall succeed. By and by, we insert one which turns with perfect ease, and the bolt gives at the slightest pressure; we turn again, and again; we keep on, and find no resistance; every bolt yields to the mysterious key, and the door at length stands open. *Are we not sure that we have found the right key?* Apply it to the case before us. Is it not incredible, my brethren, that in unfolding the inconceivably grand scenes here opened to our view, which no finite thought would ever have reached, that we should not have come to a ward in this mysterious structure, which we could not have passed if we had not secured possession of the right key? I leave it with you to determine whether our interpretation is consistent with itself,

and whether, also, the stupendous events here unfolded, do not form one complete, harmonious whole, joined together with a perfection which could have been secured by none but him who saw the end from the beginning.

arrangement of the prophecy is to return back, and give a more perfect statement of particular events, which in the preceding series must be passed over rapidly, the mind settles at once into the clear conviction that this account of the new Jerusalem, and the new heavens and earth, is the more full description of Christ's reign upon earth, and just such an one as we might expect. I may add a remark made by Fuller, that, "It seems singular that the heavenly state should be introduced as a subject of *prophecy*. It is doubtless an object of *promise*; but prophecy seems rather to respect events in the world in which we dwell, than in the world to come." "I saw new heavens and new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea."^m In the great earthquake of the seventh vial the old heavens and earth passed away, or, as represented by Daniel, the great image of gold and silver and brass and iron and clay became like the chaff which the wind carried away. The idea is of the utter annihilation of the political fabrics of earth, which are all controlled by selfish ambition, and made subservient to mere worldly ends. They are the kingdoms of this world, belonging to this age, and never can be brought into alliance with the church of God, except to her corruption and degradation. Have we not settled it as a political maxim in our country, not to be controverted, that the state must be kept distinct from the church, and that there must be no alliance between them? It is true. There never can be. These worldly political fabrics have no part in the kingdom of God. They are to be done away, as when the heavens are rolled together as a scroll. Great Babylon is to fall. All the cities of the nations, or their ecclesiastical hierarchies, are to be buried in ruins. The islands are to flee away, and the mountains are not to be found; and then God shall create new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness; to which Isaiah adds: "The former shall not be remembered nor come into mind." These new heavens

the most sumptuous manner for the happy espousals. These symbols therefore appropriately represent the millennial church. The description of this church, too, "as a bride adorned for her husband," or her espousals, is evidence that the millennial reign is herein described and not the heavenly state; for the marriage of the Lamb takes place immediately after the fall of Babylon.

What precisely we are to understand by this city's coming down from God out of heaven, I do not know; perhaps its heavenly origin.

Chap. 21 : 3, 4.—And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away.

THE statement of these verses respects not what John *saw*, but what he heard proclaimed by a voice from heaven. The object of the declaration is to show us what will be the *relation and condition* of the church during the coming period.

First, *relation* of men to God. This is set forth in the presence of his *tabernacle* among them, and his *covenant* with them, which we may understand by referring to the same as connected with God's ancient people. When the Lord had brought them to Sinai, the first thing that he did was to enter into a covenant with them that he should be their God, and they his people. This was the *constitution* of the Hebrew commonwealth, embodied in this one article, and submitted to the people for their decision, (Ex. 19 : 3-8,) which they unanimously adopted. After they had thus chosen the Lord Jehovah to be their God, and engaged to obey his voice in all things that he should command them, he proceeded to give them his laws and ordinances, directing them how he

them unto the greatest of them.”—Jer. 31: 31–34. In the millennium, then, that covenant is to be carried out in its full spirit, being written in the hearts of men, and not therefore to be broken, as was the former one. It will not be a theocracy in form merely, but pervaded in every part by the whole spirit of the Gospel, the subjects of it being the real children of God.

When Jehovah too is thus again acknowledged as the only and supreme law-giver, he will establish his *tabernacle* once more among men, the place of his habitation, “and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.”

Then follows a description of the *condition* of blessedness of the church which will follow. “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall be any more pain, for the former things are passed away.” It is evident that the language of this and the preceding verse is literal and not symbolic, for it is not what John *saw* but *heard*. These facts are subsequently symbolized in the vision of the holy city, but here they are simply proclaimed by a voice from heaven; and the absence of tears, and sorrow, and crying, and pain, is a literal description of the blessedness of those times when God’s covenant shall again be established on earth, and his law be written on all hearts. The reason also is added why tears and sorrow and pain are no more found; “for the former things are passed away.” The whole economy of things is changed—the reign of sin is at an end, and God hath created all things new. Isaiah describes the same as follows, “He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth; for the Lord hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us; this is the Lord, we have waited

be any more pain ; for the former things are passed away." The passage already quoted from Isaiah, affirms the same thing, "He will *swallow up death in victory*: and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces." What is meant by this swallowing up death in victory, the Apostle Paul fully explains, and sets the point beyond the question. He says that Christ shall subdue all his foes, putting down all authority and power that is opposed to his kingdom. "For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."—1 Co. 15: 25, 26. When this destruction takes place, he states at the close of the same chapter, v. 51, "Behold I show you a mystery : we shall not all sleep (*all* are not to die), but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump ; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we (the living) shall be changed." This of course is at Christ's second coming. "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality, *then* shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, (that of Isaiah,) Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting ? O grave, where is thy victory ? Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Some may apply this language to the believer when he falls sweetly asleep in Jesus. But he surely does not triumph over death and the grave, when he becomes the victim of both, and we bury his clay-cold corpse out of our sight in the dark prison of the tomb. But there is a time coming when that saying is to be brought to pass, "Death is swallowed up in victory." The time is coming when death, as the last enemy, shall be destroyed, and the grave shall no more be the conqueror. The period to which the Apostle refers this final victory, is the resurrection of the saints, of which he had all along been speaking, and which (v. 23) he states to be at Christ's coming: "*Then* is to be brought to pass the saying"

fact, likewise, gives beautiful harmony to those already unfolded, as connected with the first resurrection. If death is to be abolished during the millennial period, so that believers are no more to go down to corruption and the grave, how eminently fitting is it, that the saints of past ages should, at the coming of Christ, put on their incorruptible bodies? How inappropriate would it seem, that after death had been removed from the earth, the grave should still be holding all the beloved saints of Jesus, who had gone down to its silent mansions during this dark period of the church's history, and who had proved faithful even unto death? No, Christ will put upon them the glorious seal of his approval, by bringing them with him in his kingdom. He will not permit them to be holden of death through all the glorious era of his long triumph, to be awaked at last with the wicked dead for judgment. That were too deep a dishonor to be put upon those whose names are in the book of life, and who have been "baptized for the dead," or in hope of the resurrection of the dead.

In this removal of death, it is not necessary to suppose that all who are born during the millennium continue to live in the flesh until its close. They may live their appointed time on earth, whatever it be, and then pass to their *immortal* state, as do the living saints at Christ's coming, who are not to *sleep*, but are to be *changed*. The abolishing of death does not involve their necessary continuance in the flesh.

Have we not, also, a pledge of what is to be hereafter, in what has already taken place? Some, doubtless, will be startled at the idea here advanced, and hardly conceive it possible that such an era is coming to our world. But this very thing of which we speak, glorious as it is, is an event not wholly unknown even to this present darksome period. Enoch was translated that he should not see death—Elijah was borne away from earth in chariot and horses of fire—and what God *has* done to those eminent saints of old, may

it is, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end." Then follow his blessed promises held out to the faithful, and the reward also to the wicked. These are to be understood, not as spoken to these classes at that day of final restitution, but when the revelation was given to John, and therefore to us. "I will give unto him that is athirst of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things: (in the margin *these things*,) and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." This is the reward in reserve for those who endure through this period of trial, and overcome at last. They shall drink of living waters, which will be sweet and refreshing indeed to those who have toiled through this fight; and they shall inherit these things—these new heavens and earth. God shall be their God, and they his sons. Oh! what an honor! what a destiny in reserve for the faithful! with what glorious anticipations may the believer look forward to the revelations of that day, and with Paul say, "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead!"

What warning also to the wicked! The same voice that utters the promise, pronounces also the threatening. "The fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." God says, "these words are true and faithful." They came from him who sat upon the throne, the Alpha and Omega. He has put his everlasting seal to them, and pledged his veracity to their truth. Dear hearer, will you receive them as the word of him who cannot lie, and cast in your lot with his people, to endure through this brief period of trial, till Christ shall come to call his ransomed home? Or will you take part with the other class, to know no resurrection until the last day, when that other company shall be summoned from their graves, to see no Saviour, but only an angry Judge? Oh, it will be

SERMON XXVI.

Chap. 21 : 9-21.—And there came unto me one of the seven angels, which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God : and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal ; and had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel. On the east, three gates ; on the north, three gates ; on the south, three gates ; and on the west, three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. And the city lieth four-square, and the length is as large as the breadth : and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length, and the breadth, and the height of it are equal. And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel. And the building of the wall of it was of jasper : and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper ; the second, sapphire ; the third, a chalcedony ; the fourth, an emerald ; the fifth, sardonyx ; the sixth, sardius ; the seventh, chrysolite ; the eighth, beryl ; the ninth, a topaz ; the tenth, a chrysoprasus ; the eleventh, a jacinth ; the twelfth, an amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls ; every several gate was of one pearl ; and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

Chap. 22 : 1-5.—And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month : and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse : but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it ; and his servants shall serve him : and they shall see his face ; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there ; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun ; for the Lord God giveth them light : and they shall reign for ever and ever.

In approaching Jerusalem, the traveller is not aware of its proximity, until, ascending an eminence, the glorious city bursts upon his astonished vision, when he is ready to exclaim with the Psalmist—" Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the

city of the great King.”—Ps. 48 : 2. To such a commanding point of vision was John carried by the angel, from which the new Jerusalem could be surveyed in all its boundless extent and surpassing glories ; and never did imagination conceive anything approaching the magnificence of that which pen of inspiration has here described.

This new Jerusalem, as heretofore stated, is a symbol of the millennial church, as Babylon, an idolatrous city, represented the Romish hierarchy. It was “a great city”—how great, we shall soon discover—“the *holy* Jerusalem,” descending out of heaven from God. The ancient Jerusalem was regarded as a sacred city, because the dwelling place of Jehovah, where he had recorded his name, and where was his temple. So was the new Jerusalem *the holy city*, “Having the glory of God, and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.”

“The glory of God” was that visible manifestation, called the Shekinah, which Jehovah made of himself in the tabernacle to his ancient people, the nature of which it is necessary to understand, in order to appreciate what is said of it as connected with the new Jerusalem. We cannot here enter into a full discussion of this subject ; we can only indicate some of the leading facts relating to it.

We stated, in a previous discourse, that Jehovah was the accepted king and law-giver of his people Israel, and that he had his *tabernacle* among them, where he abode by his presence, where he might be approached and consulted, and make communications of his will. That visible presence was “*the glory of God*,” or the Shekinah ; and the Jews regarded it with the highest possible veneration, as the embodiment of the Diety. The sacred writers often speak of it in the same terms as of Jehovah himself. They refer to this when they speak of *seeing God*. “Then went up Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel,

and *they saw the God of Israel.*”—Ex. 24 : 9, 10. “I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.”—Isa. 6 : 1. And again, in verse 5 : “For mine eyes *have seen* the King, the Lord of hosts.” The spiritual essence of God cannot, of course, be revealed to mortal vision, yet there was a manifestation of the Deity which was made visible to the eyes of men, and which Moses and Isaiah speak of as *seeing God*. It is spoken of as *the presence* and *the face* of Jehovah. “And he said *my presence* shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.”—Ex. 33 : 14. “And the Lord spake unto Moses *face to face*, as a man speaketh unto his friend.”—Ex. 33 : 11. It is spoken of as *the Lord*, and *the word of the Lord*, or the Logos, because it spake by an audible voice, and communicated the will of God. That which spake to the people, or to Moses, and used the personal pronoun I, as applied to Jehovah, might be regarded as the manifestation of the Deity. So they speak of it as *the Lord*. This, likewise, was *the angel of the Lord*, or *the angel of God’s presence*, *the angel of the covenant*, that went before the people of Israel. There is no other angel besides this ever described ; and this evidently was the one who led them, and bare them on eagle’s wings. The term *angel* is not confined to created intelligences. It is applied to winds, fires, pestilences, anything that may be employed as a minister of God, or a medium through which he may reveal his will. Thus was the Shekinah called *the angel of the Lord*, or *of his presence*—literally, *face*, because, as the human face is the grand medium of revealing the indwelling soul, so the Shekinah was the most glorious outward manifestation of the Divine Spirit.

This “glory of God” first appeared to the Israelites, enveloped in the cloudy pillar, within which it abode. When the tabernacle was reared, it entered the holy of holies, and took up its residence between the cherubim, over the mercy seat. We are at no loss to determine from Scripture, that

Christ will appear in the veil of his flesh again, as in his humiliation; there seems to be no evidence of that. And whether it will be precisely as in the Shekinah of the Old Testament, I do not pretend to say. But "*the glory of God*" will be there manifest: *and Jesus Christ is that glory*, the very "brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person."

In ancient times, cities were always surrounded with walls; and the more important the city, the higher and stronger were the walls built, which were designed as a defence against all enemies. Having walls, it was necessary to have gates also, to furnish ingress and egress to the inhabitants; these must be in charge of faithful guardians who would have authority to open and shut them according to the regulations of the city. In accordance with these ideas the new Jerusalem is represented. "It had a wall great and high," the strong defence and security of Zion, her impregnable fortifications, within which she could dwell in perfect peace far from all alarms and dangers. The three gates on each side represent the full and free access had to the city from every quarter. It was customary to give names to the gates, as we do to our streets; and those of the holy city were named after the twelve tribes, which embraced all of God's ancient covenant people, and here denotes the completeness of the millennial church, as composed of all the spiritual Israel. The twelve angels stationed at the gates denote that the city was under the immediate protection and guardianship of God. Perhaps the idea of the most perfect security is also intended. The porter or keeper of a city gate was an office of great importance, the guardianship of all within being put into his hands. It was necessary that he should be eminently vigilant and trustworthy, to give notice of any approaching danger, and keep the gates closed against every enemy. With angels, then, as the sleepless faithful porters of the new Jerusalem, the inhabitants might ever dwell in security, fearing the approach of no enemy.

attire. She has not been presented to Christ a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing. But she is to be, and her glorious proportions are to be, as here represented, all perfect and symmetrical.

In the amazing dimensions of this city is shadowed forth the vast number of the redeemed, and the long continuance of the reign of Christ. In order to carry out the symbol of *a city*, it must of necessity be made smaller than the earth itself, and within it. Yet it is constituted of such dimensions as most clearly to be wholly unadapted to any state of things hitherto known in the history of the world. We have had *empires* fifteen hundred miles square, but no such *cities*. Babylon was a great city, one of the greatest ever known on earth, being fifteen miles square; and this was employed as a symbol of the Romish hierarchy, which continued for twelve hundred and sixty years. It is not a little singular that there should be such coincidences in the dimensions of these two cities. Babylon was exactly four-square, being fifteen miles on each side. The new Jerusalem was fifteen hundred miles square; and in such incredible dimensions, out of all proportion to any existing state of things upon earth, or anything which could now be adapted to them, we may see that the continuance of the millennial church will not be after our present ideas of things. If this new Jerusalem had been represented as only ten miles square, we might be more inclined to believe in a millennium of a thousand years. But a city of fifteen hundred miles is far more consonant with a millennium of three hundred and sixty thousand years.

"And the building of the wall of it was jasper," the same precious crystal gem before mentioned. The wall was not granite, or freestone, or marble, which make the most imposing structures which human pride and ambition can rear, fit for the palaces of kings. But think of the wall of this holy city, two hundred and sixteen feet high, and stretching around a circumference of six thousand miles, all built of the purest

we are journeying. We shall not be disappointed when we get there, and long to return again to the country whence we came. It is the city of which God hath spoken to us, and our eyes shall behold its splendor. If, too, we do not find actual gold, we shall see such excellence, and perfection, and purity, and that in such abundance, that a city all built of the most fine gold is but the outward shadow of it.

The twelve courses of stone in the foundation have already been alluded to. They are here more minutely described. It might, perhaps, have been supposed that the *foundation* would be composed of rougher material, but not so. The most brilliant, costly gems were taken to lay these courses. It is not necessary to enter into a minute description of them, except to state that there are none of greater value than those here named, and the very ones which, as the most costly and beautiful, were set in the magnificent breastplate of the Jewish high priest, having engraved on them the names of the different tribes. If we are correct in supposing the jasper to be the diamond, then the first was white, the next three were of a bluish shade, the next two of a reddish cast, the seventh yellow, the next three of different tints of green, and the two last of a scarlet, or splendid red. Upon these the names of the twelve Apostles were inscribed, as were those of the tribes in the breastplate of the high priest, and placed as the foundation courses in the wall of the new Jerusalem. Those brilliant gems with which so many are proud to adorn their persons, are here put as massive courses of stone, to adorn the foundation of this city's walls, stretching far away in the distance, beyond the utmost range of vision. As already stated, they symbolize that perfect and harmonious system of Divine truth which Apostles preached, and upon which the walls of salvation for Zion are reared, and will stand unshaken for ever.

“And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl.” We have rich necklaces of pearl,

Lamb are the temple of it." In this, doubtless, is set forth the pure and spiritual worship which the church will render to God and to Christ, and the free access which all will be permitted in approaching him. Under the old dispensation, and in the temple service, the high priest alone was permitted to go into the holy place to appear before God, while the people stood without. But in the new Jerusalem, all will be kings and priests unto God, and he himself the temple there, more glorious far than that made by hands, and within which dwelt the Shekinah of the Divine presence, There will be no literal Jerusalem with its temple, to which the tribes will have need to repair, for "the glory of God" will not then dwell between the cherubim in the most holy place. It fills the city, and there is then no need of any temple within which it may take up its abode. "The Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it," who thus constitute the glory of the new Jerusalem, as did the temple on Mount Zion that of old. Thus filling the city, too, all have access to him as his spiritual worshippers.

"And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it." The sun and moon we have always taken as symbols of the supreme rulers in the state, and such I understand them to be here. In the millennial era, there will be no need of these, "for the glory of God will lighten it, and the Lamb will be the light thereof." Under the Jewish economy, the Shekinah in the tabernacle was the symbol of the Divine presence, and the representative of Jehovah, who was the actual king and law-giver of Israel. In the same way, the holy city will be illuminated by the glory of God and the Lamb. They shall rule in the midst of Zion, so that that there will be no need of other potentates and kings beside. Perhaps it may strike the minds of some unpleasantly, that civil governments, as they now exist, should be done away in the kingdom of God; and they may think it to be impossible, deeming the organization of the

state essential to the existence of society. I alluded to this subject in the last discourse, but, perhaps, did not say enough to present the subject clearly. I will add, therefore, a few words more on the same point.

The fact symbolized in the passage before us is, that the world in the millennium is to be placed again under a theocracy, and that Christ is to be its law-giver and king. There are to be no political governments aside from his, and no supreme power or sun in the state independent of him. *The kingdom is to be his.* The subject thus presented may find striking illustration and confirmation in Jewish history. It is a wonderful fact, without a parallel in the world beside, that the Jews had no *legislative* body. No provision was made in their system for one. Their kings were only executive officers, and these even would not have been given them, except for the hardness of their hearts. We probably would have said beforehand that no civilized, enlightened nation, could have existed without a legislative department. Yet the most free and happy nation that ever had an existence on earth, and which perhaps had a longer continuance than any other, had none such in their government, and for a long period of their history had no permanent supreme executive. Do you ask for an explanation of this anomaly? The Hebrew commonwealth, then, was a *theocracy*, and God, their king, was their law-giver. He gave them their constitution and laws at the beginning, and they needed no legislative body afterward to mend his work, any more than we need a convention every year, or every few years, in the United States, to alter the constitution of our country. We can conceive of that instrument having been made so perfect in the beginning, that it would never have needed any alteration. If a perfect body of laws also could have been adopted by our first Congress, we should never have needed another to be called together. These suppositions now were actual verities in Jewish history. God was the author of their

whole constitution and system of statutes. He gave them perfect to the nation at the beginning. A legislative body therefore would have been a superfluity altogether. The only departments provided for were the executive and judicial: and in respect to the former, God regarded it as a direct insult offered to him, that they asked a king, like the nations around them. They did not need one. They would have been better without one.

Where now is the difficulty of having this most perfect system of human government ever devised, repeated again in those blessed times that are to come? What would be more natural than this? The kingdom under the whole heaven is the Lord's. Christ is king in Zion—the acknowledged law-giver on earth. He again legislates for the world, as he did for his ancient covenant people. Will not then a legislature in the state become a superfluity again? And what will men want of kings or supreme rulers, when Christ with mild sceptre reigns over all? Will his saints thus insult him by asking a king like the nations? It is possible that there may be some inferior judicial and executive officers; but if so, they will be in subordination to the government of Immanuel, and constitute a part of it. There cannot be any thing like a state government independent of the theocracy, if such theocracy exists over the world, as it will in the millennium. As to judicial and executive officers even, there will be but very little need of them. *Criminal* courts will be done away, for jails, and penitentiaries, and gallows will belong to “the former things” which have passed away; and as to *civil suits*, there will be very few, if any, cases that may not easily be settled by arbitration, when all parties are disposed to do right. Hear what Paul says on this point. “Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? And if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge

the smallest matters? If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are *least esteemed* in the church. I speak to your shame. Is it so that there is not a wise man among you? No, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren? Now there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another."—1 Co. 6: 1-7. The *fault* therefore will probably not exist in the millennium.

Take away now out of the state all our legislators, with our higher executive and cabinet officers, all our criminal, and nearly, if not quite, all our civil judges—take away all the subordinate and executive officers, who are made necessary by the prevalence of crime and injustice, such as sheriffs, jailers, justices of the peace, police officers, and others of like character—all our navy and army officers, and how much of a state organization will there be left? Let Christ's glorious *kingdom* come, and its holy laws be extended over all, and it is true that "the city will have no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God will lighten it, and the Lamb will be the light thereof." The state will be merged in the church. The new Jerusalem is the glory of that coming period, embracing the whole earth. This city is the church within which Christ dwells, and where the glory of God is seen.

In the following verses the same idea is embodied in another form, and confirms the interpretation already given.

"And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day; for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it." The symbol is that of a splendid metropolis, which becomes a light and glory to all nations, and which the kings of the earth unite to beautify and exalt. These kings, instead of magnifying their own thrones and kingdoms, as they have been

wont to do, bring all their honor any glory, and lay them at the foot of the throne of our Immanuel. And when *kings* lay their honors there, Jesus Christ will indeed be exalted over all. Isaiah, in describing these blessed times, states the same facts, and uses in some cases the same language. The description of Isaiah also will show still more clearly that the new Jerusalem of John is a symbol of the millennial church, and not of the heavenly state.

“ Arise, shine ; for thy light is come, and *the glory of the Lord* is risen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine eyes round about, and see ; all they gather themselves and come to thee ; thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. Then shalt thou see and flow together, and thine heart shall fear and be enlarged ; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee.” The idea here is, of the subjection of all nations to Zion, the whole earth being made tributary to the church. “ The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah ; all they from Shebah shall come ; they shall bring gold and incense ; and they shall show forth the praises of the Lord. All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee ; the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee ; they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and I will glorify the house of my glory. Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows ? Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the Lord thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee. And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee ; for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favor have I had mercy on thee. Therefore *thy gates shall be open continually ; they shall not be shut day nor*

night ; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought. For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish ; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted. The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, and the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary ; and I will make the place of my feet glorious. The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee : and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet ; and they shall call thee, *The city of the Lord, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel*. Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man passed through thee, (describing the church in her time of tribulation preceding,) I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations. Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breast of kings ; (they shall furnish her support and nourishment ;) and thou shalt know that I the Lord am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob. *The sun shall be no more thy light by day ; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee ; but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon unshadow itself ;* (apparently contradicting the declaration of the preceding verse, which says that they shall not have any sun or moon ; but applying the symbols to rulers it is all plain ;) for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended. *Thy people shall be all righteous ;* they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified. A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation ; I the Lord will hasten it in his time.”—Isaiah 60 : 1-22. Thus does Isaiah describe the glories of the millennial era under the same symbols. The church is then to be “The city of the Lord.” The sun and moon shall not give them light, yet they are to have a sun which shall never set.

All nations are to be made tributary to them—all kings are to serve them.

When the kings and nations then bring their glory and honor into this city, the state will be swallowed up in the church, and this shall become the praise of the whole earth. These nations and kings surrender, as it were, all their honor, and rejoice to bring it into Zion, their greatest glory consisting in being its citizens and subjects. The language then does not imply, as some at first might think, that there will be nations and kings outside of the new Jerusalem, or that the church will exist among them just as it now does; but directly the contrary. If we should say of Canada and Mexico, that they had brought their honor and glory into the United States, we should assert the fact that they had ceased to exist as independent and foreign governments, and been merged in our own. So when the kings and nations bring their glory into the new Jerusalem, it does not imply their continued existence, but their cessation—that they have laid their honors at the feet of the church.

The gates of a city were always closed at night, as we close the doors of our dwellings, in order to preserve the peace and safety of those within. But the gates of the new Jerusalem stand open night as well as day; “for there shall be no night there,” no time of fear, or alarm or danger. The night shall be as secure as the day. The symbol denotes the perfect peace and security of those blessed times, as Isaiah says, “I will also make thy officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness. Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.”—Ch. 60: 17, 18.

“And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life.” This strongly declares the holiness of the millennial period,

or the fact that the kingdom belongs to the saints. Some suppose that it is too strong, and can only apply to heaven. But Isaiah states the same thing in language as strong. "*Thy people shall be all righteous* ; they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified."—Ch. 60 : 21. "They shall call them, *The holy people, The redeemed of the Lord* ; and thou shalt be called Sought out, A city not forsaken."—Ch. 62 : 12. "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness ; the unclean shall not pass over it ; but it shall be for those ; the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there ; but *the redeemed of the Lord* shall walk there ; and the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads ; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."—Ch. 35 : 8-10. These representations of the ancient prophet are the same with those of John, and as strong. They do not agree indeed with those who think that the millennium is to be a *mixed* state like the present, the tares growing in the field as they do now, though not quite so numerous. But such views we regard as far more conformed to the "former things" which are to pass away, and very unlike that happy state when God shall "make all things new." The whole symbol of the new Jerusalem requires us to believe that wickedness and irreligion and tares shall be vanished from the world. This city of God manifestly covers the whole earth. The kingdom under the whole heaven is given to the saints. This church is the true church of Christ, his bride ; and none enter there, "but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." When Satan too is bound, and Christ reigns, why should not "thy people be all righteous ?" Yes, we look forward to a better day for Zion, than when the tares shall

be found growing as now they do ; even to a day, when all the earth shall be *filled* with the glory of the Lord."

By "the river of the water of life" is represented the life giving influences of the Holy Spirit, which like a full and crystal stream are to flow through the city, giving drink to all the inhabitants thereof. These are the living streams of salvation of which all partake ; and why then should not all be holy ? "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more ; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall *lead them unto living fountains of waters* ; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."—Ch. 7 : 16, 17. Such pure waters, abundant as those which a river affords, are a beautiful symbol of the constant and abiding influences of Divine grace which shall be bestowed upon the millennial church. They shall not come down in showers, or distil as the dew, as now ; but they shall flow in a full river of salvation "out of the throne of God and the Lamb."

Upon the banks of this river grew "the tree of life," (a most appropriate place for it) "which bare twelve manner of fruits," or rather twelve fruit harvests, not twelve different kinds of fruit, "yielding her fruit every month ; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." The tree of life in the garden of Eden was the symbol of man's immortality, by which I mean his incorruption, perhaps the *means* of it ; for, after his fall, it was securely guarded, and he put out of the garden, "lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat and live for ever."—Ex. 3 : 22, and thus frustrate the decree that God had just uttered against him of returning to dust and corruption. But in the new Jerusalem that tree shall bloom again, and bear fruit abundantly ; and no cherubim with double flaming sword shall guard the way of approach to it. It is added immediately afterward, "*and there shall be no more curse.*" Thus the fact of the removal of death is set forth by symbol,

and positive statement. The days of mourning to Zion will surely then be ended.

By *seeing God's face*, is meant either that they shall enjoy his continual favor and smiles, or see him as Moses and the elders of Israel saw him, when they beheld "the glory of God," the visible manifestation of his presence. Whichever it be, it conveys the idea of the perfection of happiness that is involved in seeing God's face, while banishment from his presence is the perfection of all misery. "And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light; and they shall reign for ever and ever." By "the light of the sun," we may, perhaps, understand something different from the sun itself, which is a symbol of civil rulers. Here the light of the sun is connected with that of a candle, and both are represented as unnecessary, as *there will be no night there*. It probably denotes the fact that the reign of ignorance and error is at an end, for the Lord God shall make one clear eternal day.

Some have supposed that the last clause, of the saints *reigning for ever and ever*, was clear evidence that this described the heavenly state, and not the millennium. But it is applicable to the latter as well as the former. The saints will reign for ever with Christ. There is no intimation given in the Revelation of the termination of their reign. Satan will be let loose for a "little season," and Gog and Magog shall compass the city of God, but they shall not prevail. Fire shall come down from heaven and consume them. The devil shall be taken and cast into the burning lake with all the enemies of God—rebellion in the universe shall finally be put down, and then the saints shall reign on for ever and ever. Blessed, my brethren, are they indeed, which shall be called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

SERMON XXVII.

Chap. 22: 6, 7.—And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true. And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly be done. Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.

WITH the description of the new Jerusalem, closes the grand panoramic scene of this book. The remaining verses of this chapter contain various warnings and invitations in view of the stupendous revelations made, with some additional confirmation of their truth, and the manner of their communication.

Could these revelations have all been understood when they were communicated, and the history of the church and the world, as it has since come to pass, been seen, the question would, doubtless, have been asked, Can these things be so? Can it be that such a dark period of trial is before the people of God, and that within the church itself is to grow up such a gigantic system of wickedness and despotism, to be their most cruel enemy and persecutor? Christ, however testifies that “these sayings are faithful and true;” nor have eighteen hundred years proved one of them false. They have all come to pass—not one has failed. Strange and wondrous as the events were, complicated and unlooked for, yet century after century has only established, as matters of history, the visions of prophecy already recorded. We may be sure, also, that the sayings which yet remain to be fulfilled are just as faithful and true as those which have been already accomplished. Not one declaration of promise to the saints, or threatening to the wicked, shall fall to the ground.

After this full endorsement of the truth of the revelations made, the statement of chapter 1 : 1 is repeated, concerning the manner in which they were communicated, as well as their origin. They came from the "Lord God of the holy prophets, who sent them to his servants by the hand of an angel, and I John saw these things and heard them." When one is sent by a human government with important despatches to another power, he carries with him proper credentials of his being an authorized minister of his government. Here, then, are the credentials of this heavenly messenger and of John, in regard to this wondrous revelation. "*I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches.*"

"Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book." You will notice how the *coming of Christ* is thus singled out as the grand event of the prophetic history, the hinge upon which all the others turn. It is introduced here, as if it were the one point rising high above all the rest, first arresting the eye of faith, and toward which the expectation of all the church would be directed. In this, prophecy would find its grand fulfillment. Here was the accomplishment of all of Zion's glorious hopes. Here the defeat of all of Zion's foes. It was the turning point of the whole drama. "Behold, I come:" yea, "*I come quickly.*" The time may seem long to many. So that scoffers, and bold, blaspheming persecutors, may ask in their insolence and pride, "Where is the promise of his coming?" and the martyred saints, in their sore travail, may cry, "O Lord, how long?" but the time is short. Quickly will I come for judgment and salvation; judgment to my foes, salvation to my chosen faithful ones. "Blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book. Blessed is he who endures to the end of this period of trial. Blessed is he who is found with the seal of God in his forehead, and not the mark of the beast.

Blessed is he who watches and waits for the bridegroom's coming, that he may enter in to the marriage supper of the Lamb, and share the glorious resurrection of the just." Yes, Christ pronounces him *blessed*. He is among the favored, honored ones of earth. He may be poor now, but to him belongs *the kingdom of God*. He may hunger now, but ere long he shall be filled. He may weep now, but soon he shall laugh, and tears be for evermore wiped from his eyes. He may be hated, and reproached, and separated from the company of men, and his name cast out as evil. But his is among the choicest names of earth, and ere long he shall be introduced to the best society. "Blessed is he," thrice and for ever blessed. God declares that he is, and he certainly knows.

Chap. 22: 8-9.—And I John saw these things and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.

WHAT exactly was intended by this act of John, or what the impressions were upon his mind inducing to it, it is difficult to understand. Whether he mistook the angel for Christ, or whether he designed to express simply his gratitude to the angel for his communications made, or whether he intended an act of adoration, cannot be satisfactorily determined. The angel, however, would not allow anything that bore even the appearance of Divine honors paid to a creature. The rebuke to John also stands in most remarkable contrast to the sublime and adoring worship which throughout the Revelation is represented as paid to Christ, by all the redeemed and angelic throng, yea, by every creature which is in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea. *To God and the Lamb* do they

all unite to render equal honor and praise for ever and ever. No higher worship could be offered to any being, than is there offered to Christ the Lamb. It is a worship with *harps and censers*, with prayers and praises, and this, too, in the very presence of Jehovah. Yet where is the warning admonition, "See thou do it not: worship God." Yes, worship *God*. Christ then, my brethren, is God—God over all, blessed for ever. As such he demands the homage supreme of all our hearts, the praises of all our lips. Nor need any of us fear of exalting Jesus, the Lamb, to higher honor and glory than are his due, when we have such examples set us of the adoration paid him by all the innumerable hosts above.

Chap. 22 : 10-15 —And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book : for the time is at hand. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still : and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still : and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still : and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And behold, I come quickly ; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

WHEN John heard the voice of the seven thunders, and was about to write, a voice came to him saying, "Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not."—Chapter 10 : 4. The book in the hands of him who sat upon the throne was *sealed*. Its contents were shut up, and there was no means of ascertaining what was written therein until the seals were broken, and the book was opened. To *seal* a book, then, is to shut it up, as we do a letter. Not to seal it, is to leave it open for perusal, that its contents may be made known. "The sayings of the prophecy of this book" were not then to be sealed. They were to be an open revelation to the church, that men might read and understand.

The reason given for not reading is, "because the time is at hand." This may refer to the time of Christ's coming, spoken of again immediately afterward; or, more generally, to the time of the fulfillment of these prophecies. Either of them would be a reason why the church should be made acquainted with these sayings, deeply interested as she was in their fulfillment.

The declaration of verse 11 has reference to the two great parties described in the preceding revelation, and to their present state, not to the sentence which shall be passed hereafter upon mankind by the great Judge. Although thus much is clear, yet it is not easy to determine the exact meaning to be attached to the language. Bloomfield gives the most satisfactory view of it, as follows:—"If he persists in his unrighteousness, he will reap the consequences of it;" or, as paraphrased by another writer whom he quotes, "They who, after this revelation and the awful warnings given them, continue to be unjust and filthy, let them remain so and reap the consequences worthy of their deeds." The idea then is, here is a wonderful revelation given of the actual future history of the church, in which its apostacies and corruptions are unfolded, with the final doom of persecutors; and, on the other hand, the faithful witnesses of Jesus, who adhere to their testimony and seal it with their blood. This revelation is put into the hands of men, that they may read it with all its promises and threatenings. After this now, he that is unjust and chooses his part with the enemies of God, has no excuse; let him remain unjust, and take the consequences which are plainly revealed from heaven against such. On the other hand, he that is righteous, and maintains his Christian profession amid trials and persecutions, let him remain steadfast, and receive the reward promised, even the crown of everlasting life.

"And behold, I come quickly: and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." It

will be but a little while before Christ comes to settle up the account with both parties, and render to each one according to his work. The hour of recompense to these cruel persecutors and enemies of Christ will not long be delayed—nor the time of reward to the faithful. Let them both, therefore, await that day. “Behold, I come quickly,” Zion shall not always be oppressed, nor shall the wicked always triumph. The day of judgment and of victory hastens on.

“Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.” Here the same idea is carried out respecting the two classes, and the reward which will be meted out to each, more particularly specified. He who says it speaks, also, by authority, for he is the “Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.” They that keep his commandments are blessed, and shall have a part in the new Jerusalem, partaking of the tree of life which grows by its pure river. Instead of saying, next, that the wicked shall be excluded from this city, the form of the language is changed somewhat, and a description given of those who are “without,” who cannot be permitted to enter through the gates. The term “dog,” as applied to a person, is one of great reproach. It is so among us, and much more so among the Jews, by whom that animal was regarded as unclean. By “dogs” then are meant evil workers. These, with other classes of the wicked named, are they that “are without.” They have no part in the holy city, nor the tree of life; and if shut out, the doom awaiting them is the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, God’s eternal vengeance.

Chap. 22 : 16, 17.—I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

IN a preceding verse it is said, “And the *Lord God of the holy prophets* sent his angel to show unto his servants things which must shortly be done.” In the verse before us, “*I, Jesus*, have sent *mine* angel to testify unto you these things in the churches.” Jesus Christ then is manifestly “the Lord God of the holy prophets,” and if the Lord God of the prophets, he is the Lord our God, to be loved and adored as such.

The word *root* is used in the sense of shoot or sprout from the root, which is probably its meaning here, and conveys a similar idea with *offspring*. He is the heir of David, and possessor of his throne and kingdom. “The bright and morning Star,” the brightest therefore of all the stars, and precursor of an everlasting day.

The invitation to “come” in these verses is most usually applied to men, calling upon them to partake of the living waters of salvation, and have a share in the glorious kingdom of God. The latter part of the verse is undoubtedly so to be applied. Bloomfield suggests another application to the first part of the verse, which is very striking, and probably the true one. He understands it as a response made to the annunciation by Christ, so frequently repeated, “Behold, I come quickly.” As already stated, this is selected out from all the others as the grand fact in the future history of the church, around which they all centre. This was the Christian’s hope, “even the glorious appearing of the great

the city? or will you remain with those without, to take part with dogs, and sorcerers, and whore-mongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie? Choose as you will be willing to meet the choice in that day of our Lord.

Chap. 22: 18, 19.—For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book. If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

THIS is a most solemn threatening against any who should dare to corrupt this revelation by adding to or taking from it. Nor was it a needless warning to annex to this prophecy. Here was the wondrous history of the church drawn out in the future, and the history, too, of her persecuting foes, painted in colors of deep and damning infamy, with their final dreadful doom. These enemies, it must be remembered, too, were to run a wondrous career of triumph for a long period, during which they would tread down the people of God as the mire of the streets, while they boasted themselves as the anointed of heaven, the chosen of God. Yet here was their exact portraiture, drawn with the glowing pen of inspiration: and to this very church, in all the deep mystery of her wickedness, were these revelations to be committed. The great whore had her own likeness taken and given to her for safe preservation. Would she not then corrupt these revelations, and falsify them? All the early records of the church have been falsified by the Church of Rome. The doctrine of pious fraud has formed part of the teachings of the mystical Babylon. She has proclaimed, openly and unblushingly, that if her cause could be promoted by deception and lies, they were perfectly justifiable, and her practice is consistent with her teachings. It is often the

and all would seem to have been said that could be said, yet the last closing words must still be, "*Surely*, I come quickly, Amen." To which John most fervently responds. "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." And thus responds as fervently all the church of God. The language of their hearts is,—

How long, dear Saviour! O how long,
Shall this bright hour delay!
O hasten thy appearance, Lord,
And bring the welcome day.

I leave my hearers to judge what amazing force this language has, if this coming is at the beginning of the millennial reign—and how it is stripped of its power, if that coming is not until the final judgment, and the closing up of the whole drama.

And now, my brethren, I have done with the exposition of this sublime and wonderful book. I entered upon the work with trembling and fear; yet cannot but rejoice that I was led so to do; for I can testify to the truth of the inspired declaration, which also more than anything else encouraged me to attempt the expounding of these prophecies. "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein." I have reason to believe also that this people have derived no little spiritual profit from this unfolding of the church's history—that they have had higher and nobler conceptions of what the church of God is, and more enlarged views of the unsearchable wisdom and sovereignty of Divine Providence, as well as the stupendous vastness of those great plans which he is carrying forward to their completion. It has opened a new field of study in the word of God, which we have found to be an inexhaustible mine, stored with richest treasures.

Humbly and thankfully would I acknowledge the good-

ness of God, and his help vouchsafed to me in this work ; and to him would I desire to commend it, praying that he will own whatever of it may have been in accordance with the mind of the Spirit, sanctifying these precious truths to all our hearts. God, too, in mercy grant that all of this beloved people may be so unspeakably happy as to be found among that blessed number, who shall be called to the marriage supper of the Lamb, to enter in through the gates into the city. "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."





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